WANDERINGS THROUGH ANCIENT ROMAN CHURCHES

RODOLFO LANCIANI

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BY

RODOLFO LANCIANI

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PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1924

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PREFACE

Our wanderings through ancient Roman churches are not to be entrusted to chance, but made to harmonize with a rational and well-defined scheme. The difficulty arises from the number, variety, and comparative value of such schemes, namely, from the many points of view from which the subject may be taken into consideration. It is a case of *un embarras de choix.* A group, for instance, could be formed of classic edifices adapted to Christian worship, with little or no change whatever, such as the House of Augustus on the Palatine turned bodily into a chapel and monastery of San Cesario; Agrippa's Pantheon dedicated to Santa Maria ad Martyres; the Senate House dedicated to Sant' Adriano and Santa Martina; the Tepidarium of Diocletian's Baths dedicated to la Madonna degli Angeli, etc. Another group could be constituted from the point of view of nationalities, Greeks, Portuguese, Illyrians, Abyssinians, Scots, Albanians, Belgians, Anglo-Saxons, Swiss, Armenians, Poles, Savoyards, Flemish, French, Burgundians, Teutons, etc., each country being represented by a national church or a national hospice for its pilgrims. In a third section could be gathered oratories, chapels, and meeting-halls of the innumerable guilds and trade unions, each having their "Santo protettore," such as Sant' Eligio for the Ironmongers, Sant' Agata for the Weavers, Sant' Andrea for the Rope-Makers and Potters, Sant' Anna for the Hosiers, Santa Barbara for Booksellers, Sant' Elena for Pastry-Cooks, etc.

Considering the narrow limits of space of which I can dispose in a volume of this kind, with due considera-

tion to an even balance between its various chapters; considering, moreover, the fact that there exist at the present time as many churches in Rome as there are days in the year, and that the *magnus catalogus ecclesiarum*, compiled by Cardinal Angelo Mai in "Spicilegium Romanum" (ed. 1839–44), registers one thousand names of chapels and places of worship, within a radius of four miles from the Milliarium Aureum, my task would become impossible, and my volume a mere dictionary of dates and names. To make it pleasant and agreeable to the reader, as has been the case, I hope, with the preceding volumes of this series, I have chosen the following plan. Of the six chapters of which the volume is composed, the first deals with the fate of pagan temples and of their artistic treasures, after the promulgation of the Edict of Milan, A.D. 313; the second and third, with the basilicas raised by Constantine over the graves of the Apostles Peter and Paul; the fourth and fifth, with the church of the Saviour at the Lateran and its appendage, the Hierusalem, or church of the Holy Cross; the sixth, with the minor Constantinian basilicas of Saint Agnes and Saint Lawrence.

In developing this scheme, care has been taken not to make it a question of feet and inches, of dates and fatiguing discussions, but to be rather anecdotal, relying, whenever possible, on unpublished or little known sources of information.

To make the reader sure that such is the case, I quote the following passage from the Preface to the first volume of my "Storia degli Scavi e dei Musei di Roma": "I do not pretend to have written a complete work: I do not argue, in fact, that any of my archæological volumes on the topography and history of Rome are complete. Even to-day, after half a century of research in public

and private libraries and archives, I cannot open a new volume or a new codex, without finding some new items concerning my special line of studies. Such being the case, I had to choose between two alternatives: either to continue gathering fresh information until the end of my days, or to be satisfied with my actual store of knowledge. The notes of which I can make use in writing on my special subjects constitute a library of ninety-five folio volumes, containing 18,369 notes from State Archives, 6352 from the archives of the Capitol, and about 60,000 collected in Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and England."

The above statement was made in 1902. The collection has since been increased by one third.

It is a curious fact that the Popes, who have shown so deep an interest in classical antiquities of Rome, as proved by the great excavations of the second half of the eighteenth century, and by the institution of the finest museums in the world, should have treated with indifference Christian antiquities. Up to the time of Pius IX, who was first to institute a Committee for sacred archæology, and who bought the "vigna dei sacri Palazzi" on the Appian Way, for the sake of excavating the catacombs of Callixtus, nothing had been done to explore the "Roma sotterranea cristiana" or to restore to their proper shape churches mutilated, spoilt, buried, disfigured by the Barocco restorers.

There is another fundamental consideration to be made in connection with Roman churches. Those later than the eleventh century are (with few exceptions) level with the modern city, while those previous to that century, and, to be more exact, previous to A.D. 1084, are at a lower level. This difference is a consequence

of the sack of Robert Guiscard and his Normans and Saracens in 1084. Even after the lapse of so many centuries we find traces of that fearful invasion: for instance, in the two superposed churches of San Clemente, the lower showing the level of the city before, the upper the level after, the Norman conflagration. Many more churches show the same superstructure, like those of Santi Quattro Coronati, San Crisogono, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, San Gregorio, Sant' Adriano, Santi Cosma e Damiano, etc. I am sure that if proper attention were given to this branch of Christian antiquities we should find below each of the modern churches an ancient one, especially in the alluvial plains of the Campus Martius and of the Trastevere, and also on the Cœlian Hill, where the rubbish of the Norman fire was spread on the spot, and the ground raised at once by ten or fifteen feet. This noble work has been attempted here and there with good results, but without a definite plan. Father Mullooly, the Dominican, is responsible for the discoveries at San Clemente; Father Germano, the Passionist, for those at the House of Santi Giovanni e Paolo; the Royal Society of Roman Architects for the admirable restitution of Santa Maria in Cosmedin; the architect Cannizzaro for that of San Saba on the smaller Aventine. The late Cardinal Manning wished to do the same for his titular church of San Gregorio al Celio (which ought to be officially chosen as the British Catholic Church of Rome), and a committee was appointed (Manning, de Rossi, Grisar, Crostarosa, and myself) with a first instalment of two thousand pounds, but the undertaking ended in a failure, through the opposition of a jealous Government representative. Should a definite and well-matured scheme be adopted by lovers of our ancient churches, and the proper funds

collected, and the conflict avoided between the multifarious authorities who have, or have not, a certain right to interfere, it should begin by laying bare the crypt in the middle of which lies the bronze coffin of Peter the Apostle; and then proceed to rediscover the fifty-odd churches which lie buried at depths varying from twenty to seventy feet below the level of the modern city. Such an investigation would prove equally beneficial to the classic knowledge of pagan Rome, considering that many hidden churches are simply classic halls transformed with but little change into places of worship. "Qui vivra, verra!"

LANCIANI

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* * *

CHAPTER I

THE FATE OF PAGAN TEMPLES AND OF THEIR ARTISTIC TREASURES UNDER THE RULE OF CHRISTIAN EMPERORS

PAGAN temples, like our Renaissance churches, were at the same time places of worship and museums of Fine Arts. Enough to mention that of Concord on the ascent to the Capitol (Clivus Capitolinus) and of Apollo on the Palatine, the description of which sounds like a fairy tale. I have already given the catalogue of the masterpieces displayed in the temple of Apollo in Chapter V of "Ancient Rome." It included the Apollo and Artemis driving a quadriga by Lysias; fifty statues of the Danaïds; fifty of the Sons of Egypt; the Herakles of Lysippus; a bronze figure of Augustus, fifty feet high; the high-reliefs of the pediments by Bupalos and Anthermos; statues of Apollo by Skopas, of Laton by Kephisodotos, of Artemis by Timotheos, of the nine Muses by the same (?); also a chandelier formerly dedicated by Alexander the Great at Kyme; medallions of eminent men; gold plate; gems and intaglios; ivory carvings; specimens of paleography, and two magnificent libraries. The cella of the temple of Concord contained, in its turn, one central and ten side niches, in which eleven masterpieces by Baton, Euphranor, Nikeratos, Piston, and Sthenios were placed. Pliny speaks also of paintings by Theodoros, Zeuxis, and Nikias; of four elephants cut in

obsidian, a miracle of skill and labour; and of a collection of gems, which included the sardonyx set in the legendary ring of Polykrates of Samos. The gathering of these masterpieces must have cost fabulous sums. Cæsar the Dictator gave eighty talents [1] for two pictures by Timomachos, representing Medea and Ajax. The same covered with strings of British pearls the breast of the Venus Genetrix by Arkesilaos, after having offered to the same ancestral goddess six sets of cameos and engraved gems, a statue of Cleopatra cast in solid gold, and his own portrait-statue with a gold star on the forehead.

A few years ago a shrine was discovered near the church of San Martino ai Monti dedicated by Augustus to *Mercurius Sobrius* (Mercury the Teetotaler) in the year of the City 744, from money received as a New-Year gift (*strenæ calendariæ*) from all classes of citizens. Suetonius says that the Founder of the Empire, with his usual generosity, appropriated the funds to the purchase of "*pretiosissima deorum simulacra*" (the most valuable and expensive statues of gods), to be set up at the crossings of thoroughfares of the City. We may appreciate the value of such imperial gifts if we consider that when Augustus reorganized the capital and its wards in the year 7 B.C., the number of street shrines had grown to two hundred. Two hundred and sixty-five were registered A.D. 72 in the census of Vespasian; three hundred and twenty-four at the time of Constantine. No such classic treasures are to be found in our Renaissance churches, although, from other points of view, they can advantageously stand the comparison. We might choose as typical specimens the churches of San Pietro in Montorio and Santa Maria del Popolo.

[1] About seventy-two thousand dollars.

THE TOMB OF MARCANTONIO ALBERTONI IN SANTA MARIA DEL POPOLO

The first, rebuilt by Ferdinand IV and his Queen Isabella, from the designs of Baccio Pontelli, is connected with the names of Giorgio Vasari; Bartolomeo Ammannato; Raphael, who painted the Transfiguration; Daniele da Volterra, the author of John the Baptist; Bramante, who designed the round shrine in the adjoining cloisters; Sebastiano dal Piombo, who coloured the Flagellation; and Francis Stellaert, who painted the Deposition from the Cross.

The church of Santa Maria del Popolo, likewise, built by Sixtus IV with the help of the same Baccio Pontelli, and modernized by Bernini at the time of Alexander VII, contains masterpieces by Bernardino Pinturicchio, Guillaume de Marcillac, Annibale Caracci, Carlo Maratta, Michelangelo da Caravaggio, Sebastiano dal Piombo, Raphael, Lorenzetto, and Andrea Sansovino, and precious objects such as the hanging lamp of the Chigi Chapel;[1] the stained glass of the tribune; the four columns of *bigio morato* supporting the high altar; the eight of *verde antico* in the chapel of Alderano Cybo; the grave of M. A. Albertoni, who died of "morbus Gallicus" in 1485 in his thirtieth year; the portrait of Vannozza Cattanea, under the attributes of Saint Lucy; the busts of Giovanni Battista and Paolo Mellini, and the famous monument of Cardinal Porto Carrero.

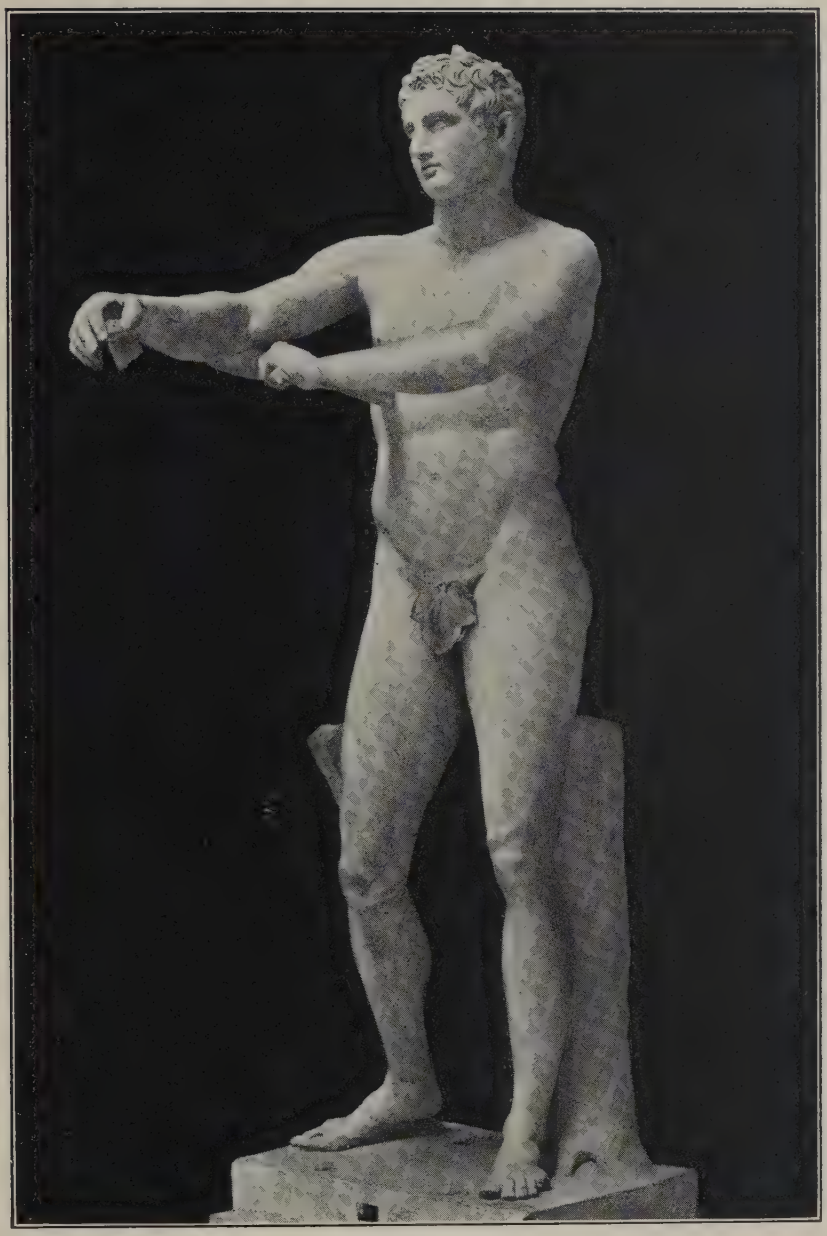
As may be deduced from these details, the temple-museums of ancient Rome, as well as Renaissance churches, contained a strange mixture of exhibits. There were no sections exclusively devoted to statuary or to galleries of paintings; but the works of classic chisels and brushes were intermixed with historical relics, and with mineral, animal, and vegetable curiosities. In the

[1] The original was sold secretly not many years ago and an imitation substituted.

temple of Juno at Argos, for instance, were exhibited silver ingots; in that of Minerva at Tegea the tusks of the wild boar of Kalydon, transferred at a later age by Augustus to Rome; in that of Mars the Avenger, the tent of Alexander the Great; in the Capitol and in the Temple of Peace, wreaths of cinnamon interwoven with bands of gold; in the temple of Augustus, a root of the same precious plant placed by Livia on a gold plate, the drops from which were hardened in globules, and sold at a great price; in that of Jupiter Capitolinus, a block of rock crystal, the largest known, weighing one hundred and fifty pounds.

In the same way we find that the possessions of the Roman Christian basilicas in the East and the Far East brought not only a revenue in coined silver (solidi), but also in rare and costly spices, such as nard, balsam, oil of Cyprus, myrrh, storax from Isauria, pepper, saffron, cinnamon, paper, flax, and cloves. This last came from the Moluccas; pepper, cinnamon, and nard from India; myrrh from Arabia or Abyssinia; papyrus from Egypt; and balsam from the banks of the Jordan. It is difficult to state to what liturgic uses saffron, oil of cloves, cinnamon, and pepper could have been put. Evidently they were sold to great advantage, and the revenue thus secured was practically the same as was gathered from the immense landed estates which the Roman basilicas of Peter and Paul owned in the eastern section of the Empire.

Did the Romans appreciate to their full value the art treasures which they had stolen or purchased from Magna Græcia, Sicily, Hellas, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt? The answer is rather uncertain. On one side we may quote the instance of the popular uprising against Tiberius for having removed the Apoxyomenos of



APOXYOMENOS

Lysippus from the public square in front of the Pantheon to his private apartment on the Palatine. On the other, we have the fact of Claudius having been allowed, without protest, to alter and destroy two masterpieces of Apelles by erasing the heads of Alexander the Great and substituting in their stead the likeness of Augustus.

The collections of works of art in ancient Rome were catalogued in the most approved fashion, and the catalogues (probably) sold in the manner of the present guidebooks. Their existence has been made known by two exceedingly interesting and little-known papyri from the Fayoûm, now in the Geneva collection (Latin V and VII). They are written in the Greek language on one face, in the Latin on the other. The Greek document has nothing to do with Rome and its art treasures: it contains a list or official statistics of farm-lands owned by a certain number of individuals in the *nome* of Arsinoe, compiled not earlier than A.D. 116 and not later than A.D. 180. The Latin document, written on the reverse of the sheet, is necessarily later, and may have been compiled about the middle of the third century. The first fifteen lines and the last nine refer only to statues and groups of statues; lines sixteen to twenty-two refer to bas-reliefs. The names of statues, groups, and reliefs are in the accusative, depending probably from an indicative verb, such as *habes* or *vides*.

The most conspicuous items of the catalogue are statues of Hercules, Vesta, Venus, Bacchus in his infancy (Infans), Minerva, Saturn, Neptune, Serapis, Anubis, Apollo, and Liberty. Each has appended the name of the author, except in cases in which the compiler of this classic guidebook was ignorant of it. Once he confesses his uncertainty about the authorship by using the formula "it may be" (*aut* Mercurius). There are

also short allusions to the history of the work, and short descriptions of its appearance.

Were the text less mutilated, it would have proved invaluable for the history of Græco-Roman scuplture and Greek painting, and for a knowledge of the peregrinations of each piece from land to land, from place to place. In spite of the fragmentary state of the catalogue, we detect hints of these "migrations" accompanied by the name of the Roman governor, consul, general, or of the Roman Emperor who took part in the spoliation of Greece. We find, for instance, in line six, the name of one or more of these despoilers (*Atilii*): and we know from Pausanias that an *Atilius*, commander of Roman auxiliary forces, was ordered to help the Athenians in the war against Demetrius of Macedonia. *Nero* is mentioned in line nine in connection with a statue of Mars the Olympian; and a *Silanus* in line twenty-eight as dedicator of another masterpiece, the name of which has perished. Particularly interesting seems to be the mention, in line two, of a *Mercurius Ebrius*, which recalls to our memory the opposition deity of *Mercurius Sobrius*, whose statue stood in a compital shrine at the junction of the Vicus Sobrius and the Clivus Suburanus, as I have already stated.[1] Another remarkable record relates to the Hercules of Glycon, discovered by Paul III in the Baths of Caracalla, and removed at a later age to the Naples Museum, where it is now known by the name of "Ercole Farnese." There occurs also the mention of the portrait of a young prince imperial, of a magistrate who had trodden the path "*honorum et officiorum*," and of a "scene" (a bas-relief) representing

[1] Compare *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 34. The shrine of Mercury the Teetotaller was discovered, under my supervision, in April, 1888, at the corner of the Via di San Martino and the Via dei Quattro Cantoni.

Typhon and his followers tearing to pieces the body of Osiris. The monotony of the text is relieved at intervals by appropriate anecdotes, one of which alludes to the well-known incident between Protogenes and Apelles, described, almost with the same words, by Pliny, XXXV, 81. This quotation proves furthermore that the catalogue comprised, besides marble masterpieces, also paintings by famous artists.

The second papyrus contains twenty-six lines. The text is much more compact, without names of authors, or comments of any kind. It is possible that it refers to the same collection, which was State or Imperial property, as suggested by the presence among its contents of "*statuæ marmoreæ domini nostri*," the "dominus" being either Septimus Severus or Caracalla. The nature of this document makes us think of the official inventories of Roman galleries and museums, compiled for the use of the cadastre, on the occasion of censuses. One of these inventories, made in A.D. 73, may be considered the foundation of Pliny's artistic excursuses, which he develops in Books XXXIV–XXXVI of his "Natural History." Without entering into a long discussion, alien to the scope of this chapter, I think we may safely assume that the inventories and descriptions revealed by the Geneva papyri refer mainly to the contents of Caracalla's Baths (*Thermæ Antoninianæ*) and give us a notion of how the Baedekers of Ancient Rome were compiled.[1]

The task of doing such work was made easy for the compilers of guidebooks by the fact that each temple possessed a register of its own collections which was

[1] For more copious information I refer the reader to Jules Nicole's excellent and most ingenious mémoire, *Un catalogue d'œuvres d'arts dans la Rome impériale.*

sometimes engraved on marble or on a bronze tablet. Famous amongst all is the catalogue of the treasures of every description pertaining to two chapels or shrines within the enclosure of the temple of Diana Taurica, on the banks of the lovely Lake of Nemi. This document was discovered by Prince Filippo Orsini in 1872, and it may be taken as a model of conciseness and efficiency. I have published its text in "Pagan and Christian Rome" (page 54).

The habit of compiling inventories was taken up by the Church from the days of the persecutions, and it was kept *au courant* until the ignorance of the Middle Ages wiped away the last vestiges of learning and civilization. The "Acta Martyrum" of the African provinces, especially of Mauretania and Numidia, contained valuable information on this point, because the first act of the enquiring magistrate was the seizure of parochial libraries, together with the sacred vessels and utensils of the Houses of Prayer. After the promulgation of the Edict of Milan, A.D. 313, the clerical libraries grew in value and number in consequence of the seizure of those belonging to the temples of the gods; and new catalogues were made.

Another point of contact and similarity between temples and churches was their immense store of gold and silver, accumulated through the lapse of centuries from votive offerings of Emperors, victorious generals, and humbler devotees, and at a later age, from Popes, Christian sovereigns, and pilgrims. I have made the following rough calculation of the treasures stored in the strong-rooms or safes of the Lateran, from the official data of the "Liber Pontificalis."

Pope Sylvester, for instance, had endowed the Ba-

THE MADONNA OF SANSOVINO IN THE CHURCH OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

silica with precious plate and utensils, weighing eight thousand and fifty-eight pounds of silver, and eight hundred and fifty pounds of gold. This happened between 314 and 335. Other offers in the course of the fourth century must have doubled those figures. In 410, the Goths robbed the Basilica of its valuables, as we are informed by the biographer of Sixtus III (432–40). The same Pope spent two thousand pounds of silver to replace the pediment of the high altar "*quod a barbaris sublatum fuerat.*" The gifts of Leo III (795–816), likewise, amounting to sixteen hundred and eighty-four pounds of silver, were stolen away by the Saracens in 846. Lastly, after the collapse of the venerable "Mother of all churches" in 896, Popes, prelates, officers, and people in general found an inexhaustible mine of gold and precious stones in the rubbish heap of the Lateran, just as Gaius Marius had extracted masses of gold from the smouldering ruins of the temple of Jupiter, and Julius Cæsar from those of the temple of Pietas.

Instances of silver treasure in holy places are not uncommon at the present day. I remember, among others, our church of Saint Augustine, with its group of the Virgin and the Infant Jesus, held in such veneration by the people that every inch of the nave and aisles was coated with silver votive offerings. Pope Pius IX authorized the Augustinians to sell this prodigious mass of precious metal, with the produce of which, amounting to many hundred thousand lire, the church was restored, *ex novo*, and painted by the leading artist of the day, Giuseppe Gagliardi.

The question of the fate of pagan temples and of their art treasures under the rule of Christian Emperors, which is the subject of this introductory chapter, is funda-

mentally connected with that of the "Conversion of Constantine," whose behaviour on matters of public worship may be termed more "opportunist" than straightforward. Orelli,[1] quoting certain inscriptions of Fabius Titianus, Prefect of Rome, A.D. 339–41, discovered on the Clivus Sacer, near the Heroon of Romulus, son of Maxentius, finds in them the evidence "that even in the Constantinian age temples of gods were built or repaired." Aubé, whose mémoire "De Constantino imp. pont. max." (Paris, 1861) shows great impartiality of judgment, repeats the sentence: "Under the rule of Constantine pagan temples were built and dedicated with due solemnity." Both LeBlant and Aubé are wrong in attributing undue weight to the pedestals of Titianus, which (as I shall prove presently) have nothing to do with the question at issue.

There is no denying that, beginning with A.D. 313, some of the imperial constitutions, laws, edicts, and documents of State are inspired by Christian principles: for instance, the law (advocated by Lactantius) forbidding the imprint of marks of infamy on the forehead of certain offenders, such as absconding slaves, criminals condemned "*ad metalla*," [2] highwaymen, thieves, etc., on the plea that no one had the right to spoil the beauty of heavenly origin which ought to shine on the face of man, made "*ad imaginem dei*."

Noticeable also is Constantine's message addressed to the Catholic Bishops on the subject of the Donatists, who, after being condemned by Pope Miltiades and the Council of Arles, had appealed to him: "*Meum judicium postulant*," he says, "*qui ipse judicium Christi expecto*." [3]

[1] *Inscript. Select.*, n. 170. [2] To hard labour in the mines.

[3] They appeal to me as a supreme judge, while myself must be judged by Christ.

There is another letter addressed to Cæcilianus, Bishop of Carthage, announcing that the Treasurer of Numidia had received orders to supply him with the funds necessary for the erection of churches. The cathedral of Cirta (Constantine) was also built at his expense in A.D. 330.

In spite of these and many more manifestations of faith, there is no doubt that he kept an even and shrewd balance between the old and new cults. Possibly he did not care much for one or the other, or else he had adopted the new faith for private use, while as a ruler he felt obliged to show consideration toward the old religious régime. The sign of Christ hoisted on the Labarum had entered the imperial palace, soon after the victory of Saxa Rubra; but nothing which savoured of paganism was changed, as far as we know. It appears that even the Palladium continued to be kept as a sacred object, as a token of the welfare of the Commonwealth — *pignus imperii* — as proved by an inscription discovered at Privernum, mentioning a "præpositus Palladii Palatini," whose office, however, seems to have been aulic, rather than sacerdotal.

We must not suppose that when Constantine entered the imperial palace, with the Christian monogram embroidered on the flags of his legions, the name of Christ was as yet unknown to the dignitaries of that historical residence. Many attempts had been made before to open the gates of the Roman Olympus to the true God. Many records of the religious synarchy professed by certain Emperors are to be found on the Palatine. Christian writers attribute to Tiberius the first attempt in favour of the Gospel, after reading the report of Pontius Pilate on the Crucifixion of Christ. They go as far as to assert that an official proposal was

made to the Senate to open the doors of Roman temples to the founder of the new faith.

Nero, according to the chronicler Malala, sought information about the new belief and showed tolerance, at least at the beginning of his reign: a fact deserving a certain credit if we remember that the appeal of Paul the Apostle was judged in his favour, and that he was a particular friend of Seneca, Nero's tutor and adviser, and of many dignitaries of the imperial court. The biographer of Hadrian says, "There is a report that he was ready to include Christ amongst the gods." Heliogabalus, the builder of a temple on the Palatine to an unknown god, wanted to institute a Jewish and a Christian priesthood to coöperate with the attendant pagan priests. I shall not repeat what every historian of the origin of Christianity says about the spirit of tolerance shown by Severus Alexander, a strong partisan of the evangelical doctrines. His "lararium" or private chapel in the imperial palace, contained the image of Christ, together with those of Abraham, Orpheus, Apollonius, etc. He also caused to be affixed in the palace many copies of the evangelical sentence, "Do not do unto others what you would not wish to be done to yourself." It is a great pity that when the imperial chapel was discovered in 1727, by Monsignore Bianchini, no attention was paid to its contents, among which we know to have been included the meteoric stone which had fallen near Pessinus, on the shores of the Black Sea, and which was known and worshipped by the name of "Needle of the Mother of the Gods."

To come back, however, to Constantine's behaviour and to his wavering between the two creeds, there is no denying that the Heroon of Romulus on the Clivus

THE MOTHER OF THE GODS AS WORSHIPPED ON THE PALATINE

Sacer, left unfinished at the death of Maxentius, was dedicated to Constantine by a decree of the Senate; and that the original inscription, bearing the name of the unfortunate youth, was erased to make room for the following one:

IMP·CAES·FL·CONSTANTINO MAXIMO
SEMPER·VICTORI·AVGVSTO·S·P·Q·R

The author of the book "De Cæsaribus" states that special priesthoods were instituted in Africa under the invocation of the Flavia Gens, namely, of the Emperor's family name. The facts, therefore, of Constantine's mild conversion, and of temples dedicated to him with pagan rites, in Rome and elsewhere, seem to be equally and contemporaneously true. It remains to be seen how these facts can be made to harmonize and fit together.

The answer is to be found in the message addressed to the people of Hispellum (Spello, between Perugia and Foligno), whose Town Council had voted the erection of a "magnificent" temple to the Flavia Gens, with a special priesthood, and the institution of anniversary games and celebrations. The rescript says: "We give our imperial consent to the erection of this 'magnificent' temple in honour of our family, provided such a structure shall be kept free from superstitious practices." All efforts of the Emperor, after the promulgation of the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313), seem to have been directed toward inducing the two parties, Christians and Pagans alike, to live in peace, in a spirit of mutual toleration and good-will. He built churches at Antioch, Nicomedia, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Rome, Constantinople, etc., but respected the temples of Rome and Byzantium. He caused copies of the Holy Scriptures to be made for the use of the clergy, while authorizing pagan professors to

keep their chairs in public schools. He kept the title and office of "Pontifex Maximus," but he did not object to being called "Bishop."

In 1863 plaster casts of the bas-reliefs and inscriptions of Constantine's triumphal arch, near the Meta Sudans, were taken by order of Napoleon III.[1] The scaffoldings erected for this purpose were taken advantage of by the Roman archæologists to investigate the problem of the dedicatory inscription of the attic, which Venuti, Nibby, Mai, Henzen, and others felt sure had been tampered with. They believed the words INSTINCTV · DIVINITATIS, of Christian significance, to have been substituted for a pagan formula, such as DIIS · FAVENTIBUS or NVTV · IOVIS · OPT · MAX. De Rossi and Henzen, having most carefully examined the surface and the joints of the marble blocks, came to the conclusion that the mention of the true God is genuine, original, contemporary with the erection of the arch, and that, far from appealing to Jupiter or any other pagan divinity, it must be interpreted as an homage paid by the Senate to the religious feelings of the Emperor, on whose "labarums" the Christian monogram had already appeared.

The arch was dedicated A.D. 315, Constantine having spent eight weeks in Rome to hasten its completion and dedication. Did he alter, on such an occasion, his policy toward the new faith?

If we consider the problem from the numismatic point of view, we find that in 315, pieces were struck with his effigy, and the legend SOLI INVICTO COMITI, which savours of Mithras-worship. The same invocation appears on coins of Crispus and Constantine the Younger. But as these were not struck at the Imperial

[1] These casts are now preserved in the École des Beaux-Arts.

Mint — which had the exclusive privilege of gold and silver coinage — but at the Senatorial, where only copper pennies could be produced, the argument loses its weight, because in the year 315 the great majority of the Senate was still devoted to the old gods.

In 321 Constantine indulges in another manifestation of pagan superstition by asking the prefect of the City what deductions the College of the Augurs had arrived at, on the occasion of a thunderbolt having struck the imperial palace.

Everything taken into consideration, we can feel very little sympathy for a *Roman* Emperor who abandoned the venerable capital of the *Roman* Empire for a new residence in the East, and who showed his contempt of its denizens by refusing to appear on the balcony of the imperial palace, in spite of the intense clamouring of the assembled multitudes, which had tendered him the most enthusiastic reception, on his entering the City by the Flaminian Gate.

Constantine has been granted by some the epithet of "Great," depicted by others as a new Nero. Before the impartial historian he stands certainly as a great prince, but responsible for many dark and cruel deeds. His perfidious behaviour toward Licinius; his cruelty toward the Frank leaders Askaric and Régais, whom he threw to the wild beasts in the arena at Trèves: the same punishment inflicted on prisoners of war; the murder of his father-in-law Maximian, undoubtedly guilty, but whose advanced age and past services ought to have appealed to his leniency; the murder of his own son Crispus and of his own wife Fausta shows how unconcerned he was about spilling human blood. Ambition and self-interest were the mainsprings of his

actions, and, if he felt appreciation and respect for Christian morality, such abstract feelings had but a scanty influence on his behaviour.

Constantine died at Nicomedia in May, 337, having been baptized by Eusebius, an Arian bishop, only a few days before. Let us hope that his repentance at the eleventh hour was sincere, and that his sins found mercy before the Supreme Judge, and that the superb basilicas, which he had raised over the graves of the Apostles and proto-martyrs, were an acceptable offer to the God of the Gospels. Still it seems that the lust for blood was inherited by his sons Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. These three, soon after the death of the father, indulged in a wholesale massacre of their kinsmen: of Julius Constans, their uncle and father of the Apostate, of two more uncles and of three cousins. Even if we were to believe the words of Eutropius about the massacre having been perpetrated, "*Constantio sinente potius quam iubente,*" it is evident that such hypocrisy may have saved appearances, but did not alter the bare truth.

We come now to the main question to which this chapter refers, namely, to the fate of temples and statues of gods after the Edict of Milan, or, to speak more exactly, from the year 313, in which the Edict was promulgated, to 394, which marks the final collapse of pagan superstition, and to 410, which marks the first capture of Rome by foreign invaders.

It seems an established fact that in the last year of Constantine's rule, some kind of mild persecution against pagan practices was instituted here and there, without any fixed system. His son Constans speaks of a "*lex divi principis parentis nostri*" (a law of our own father),

the text of which is lost, but which established a difference of treatment between temples and shrines pertaining to the State, or to private individuals or institutions, and those pertaining to rural congregations, hotbeds of superstitious practices, in which the Gospel had found no proselytes. Exceptions were made in favour of what we may call "national monuments," such as the temple of Hercules Victor at Tibur, of the Fortuna Primigenia at Præneste, of Juno Sospita at Lanuvium, not to speak of minor sanctuaries like those of Veii, Antium, Anxur, etc. No damage was inflicted on these venerable institutions, because, even now, after the lapse of so many centuries, we are apt to discover untouched sections containing well-preserved monuments, such as the polychrome mosaics at Præneste, the Ponderarium at Tibur, the bronzes at Nemi, etc.

Another document showing the wise policy prevailing in the imperial administration is to be found in a letter addressed by Constans to the Prefect of the City, concerning the above-mentioned suburban sanctuaries, the last strongholds of superstition. "The feast days and anniversaries," he says, "are celebrated by the peasantry with joyous gatherings, races, games, and athletic sports. It seems an unjust and useless measure to deprive them of these simple rejoicings, some of which are as old as the foundation of Rome."

Unfortunately, the official protection was not extended to the sacred groves. They were given up to the axe of the woodcutter; they were uprooted and made to disappear — the beginning of an era of destruction, the effects of which are felt up to the present day, not only in the Roman Campagna, but over the whole area of central and southern Italy.

There were, fortunately, exceptions to the rule. One

concerns the fate of the Lucus Arvalium (the sacred grove of the Arvalian Brotherhood), which comprised within its boundaries the temple of the Dea Dia (Ceres), the Cæsareum, the Banqueting Hall, and a race-course. It was the Circus which saved, for the time being, temple and grove, on account of the popular festivities which took place in it at the end of May. These celebrations were given up at the beginning of the fifth century, when the peasantry of the Via Campana occupied and took possession of the whole Lucus Arvalium, an invasion justified to a certain point by the fact that the lower ground of the Arvalian estate was periodically inundated by the Tiber, while the upper part suffered no such inconvenience, and was above the level of malarious influence. In the history of the destruction of Ancient Rome there is not an instance of dispersion and dissipation equal to that which befell this ancient rustic sanctuary. Fragments of the "Annals of the Brotherhood" (Acta Fratrum Arvalium), engraved on the marble coating of the temple and of the Cæsareum, have been found already in thirteen different spots: in the Vigna Ceccarelli di sotto; in the Vigna Ceccarelli di sopra; in the Via Piscinula; on the Esquiline; in the Barberini Gardens; in the Villa Negroni — Montalto; at the fourth milestone on the road to Ostia; in the foundations of Saint Peter's; in the pavement at Saint Paul's; near the Æmilian Bridge; in the Vigna Viscardi near San Lorenzo; and at the farm of la Magliana on the road to Porto.

The reason why so many temples were left standing is expressed in a decree which Theodosius the Younger addressed in 426 to the Prefect of Illyricum. It is worded as follows: "Whatever temples, shrines, and

THE SACRED GROVE OF ANNIA REGILLA

altars are still in existence, they must be destroyed, provided local magistrates give their consent to this drastic measure; or else they must be purified and sanctified with the holy emblem of the Cross." Although Theodosius' decree concerns only the Eastern Empire, still it must have had a repercussion also in the Western section, where permission was given to dedicate ancient places of worship to the true God, as had been done already in Syria, and in the provinces of Asia Minor. Inscription n. 8627 of the "Corp. inscr. Græc.," engraved on the wall of a temple changed into a church about the end of the fifth century, contains this violent expression: "The assembly of devils has become the house of God: the life-giving light shines where there reigned darkness." A homily of Saint Avitus of Vienna was recited at Geneva in 516, to commemorate the dedication of a basilica, "*destructo inibi fano*" (on the site of a shrine which has been destroyed). These exaggerations, as a rule, were not tolerated in Rome. Inscriptions, bas-reliefs, mosaics, paintings were left intact, to testify, perhaps, to the victory of the new faith over superstition. When the "Secretarium Senatus" was dedicated in A.D. 630 to Santa Martina, not only the inscription of Flavius Annius Eucharius, Prefect of the City (C·I·L· VI, 1718), engraved in the hemicycle of the apse, was left *in situ*, but the body of the church itself was ornamented with the beautiful bas-reliefs from the triumphal arch of M. Aurelius on the Clivus Argentarius, the same which are now set in the wall of the first landing of the Conservatori Palace.

When the Senatorial Hall (Curia) was dedicated to Saint Hadrian by Pope Honorius I, in the first half of the seventh century, the marble incrustations of the walls above the seats of the "*clarissimi viri*" were left intact

in spite of their profane significance. (I have seen a small section of this fine work creeping by stealth through a hole burrowed by Commissioner Boni under the threshold of the front gate.)

Pope Simplicius in the same way, while dedicating the Basilica of Junius Bassus to Saint Andrew — *in catabarbara* — satisfied himself with the addition of an apse adorned with holy images in mosaic, while in the body of the church the original decorations were allowed to remain untouched. Thus the faithful, raising their eyes toward the tribune, could see the figures of Christ and his Apostles: turning to the side walls they could see Nero, Galba, and six other Roman Emperors; Diana hunting the stag; Hylas stolen by the nymphs; Cybele on the chariot drawn by lions; a lion attacking a centaur; the chariot of Apollo; devotees performing mysterious Egyptian rites; and other such profanities reproduced in *opus sectile marmoreum* (a kind of Florentine mosaic).

I refer the reader for further information on this subject to my volume on "Pagan and Christian Rome," published in 1893, which deals naturally with Rome alone. But other instances may be found in the East, at Baalbec, for instance, and especially at Ancyra, where the Augusteum was consecrated to the Christian cult, without any damage being done to the Latin and Greek text of the Will of Augustus (*Res ges tædivi Augusti*), engraved on either side of the walls of the *cella*.

I have mentioned above that, to justify his constitution for the preservation of temples, Constantius gave two reasons: one artistic; the other opportunist. As already stated, many games, contests, competitions, races, public gatherings had their origin in anniversaries or feast days, connected with local cults, and had become a

source of income, not only to the priests who drew up the programme of the festivities, but to the whole countryside. In the same way, the existence, within the boundaries of a given district of beautiful temples and beautiful works of art was bound to attract a higher class of visitors. This is the reason why Theodosius the Elder revoked the decree (issued in 382) for the closing of a temple at Edessa, "because it was full of artistic productions," and the reason why also Cynegius, Prefect of the East, placed under official protection classic sanctuaries, provided no acts of idolatry were performed within their sacred enclosures. His benevolent rule and his moderation are praised by the aristocracy of Alexandria in the inscription of a monument raised in his honour, *ad petitum primorum nobilium Alexandrinæ urbis.* After his death in 391 the mob of the same city destroyed the Serapeum. This, however, must be taken as an exception to the rule, as certified by Saint Ambrose in his funeral oration for Theodosius, of whom he says, "*clausit templa, sed non destruxit.*"

In 399 the Bishops of northern Africa, sitting in council at Carthage, petitioned the Emperor to destroy the rustic temples which stood "*in agris in locis abditis*" (in out-of-the-way places). The answer of Honorius was peremptory: Temples, whether in secluded places or *in locis celeberrimis*, should be purified, but kept standing for artistic and monumental purposes. Private ones should be abolished. This constitution was published in 408, two years before the capture of Rome by Alaric.

A characteristic example of the uncertainty which prevailed in matters of religious legislation and policy is to be found in the behaviour of Pegasius, Bishop of Troy, a friend of Julian the (future) Apostate. Julian himself describes his visit to the ancient Homeric city in a

letter discovered not many years ago in a codex of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris: "I have seen," says Julian, "a temple of Hector with his bronze image standing on the original niche, and, opposite to it, the image of the great Achilles. The fire on the altar was still burning and the fragrance of perfumes was still floating in the air. I asked my guide, the Bishop, whether the members of his congregation were still indulging in superstitious practices, and the answer was that the citizens of Troy were simply paying honour to the memory of their heroes."

Thence Julian proceeded to the temple of Minerva, the gate of which was unlocked by the Bishop himself, to show that the images of the gods had suffered no deterioration. In fact, he had replaced with rags the vestments woven of gold, with which the statues (like our own of Saint Peter on June 29th) were clothed, to protect them from undue notice. Julian, as soon as he became master of the Empire, restored the temple, dusted and repaired the statues, and named the Christian Bishop Pegasius doorkeeper and attendant priest of Hector and Achilles. The name of Julian is connected with another less known incident in the history of the religious warfare which characterized his epoch.

I refer to the celebrated group of Paneas (Baniâs) representing the Saviour performing the miracle of the woman with the issue of blood (Mark v, 25–34), which group had been set up in front of her house. Eusebius says it still existed when he wrote, and was held in great veneration throughout Palestine and the whole East. Sozomenes adds that Julian substituted his own likeness for that of Christ, but that it was soon struck and disfigured by a thunderbolt.

The accuracy of these statements, and the veracity of these facts concerning the preservation of ancient temples, are confirmed by ocular evidence. Could we have ascended, for instance, the Clivus Capitolinus, from the Forum up to the temple of Jupiter, in company with the so-called "Pilgrim of Einsiedeln," at the time of Charlemagne, we should have wondered whether we were moving in the City of the Popes, the centre of the Catholic faith, or in the City of the Emperors, the centre of pagan superstition; so many temples being still standing intact on either side of the roadway. Leaving aside minor points of interest, such as the Rostra, the Golden Milestone, the Schola Xantha (Offices of the Ædiles Curules), and starting from the Senate House (which I proved in another work [1] to have remained in perfect preservation up to the beginning of the sixteenth century), we should have entered the Volkanal, a small square enclosed by the arch of Severus on one side, and the Temple of Concord on the other. Here was an altar to Vulcan, of great antiquity, reconstructed by Augustus in B.C. 13. I do not know whether the statue of the venerable god, imported from Vulci, was still standing on its pedestal at so late an age, but the pedestal, at all events, was in its proper place until the pontificate of Paul III, who dug it out in 1548. On the same Volkanal stood in all its glory the exquisite Temple of Concord, of which Poggio Bracciolini says that, on his first journey to Rome in 1405, he found it uninjured so that he could copy the inscription engraved on the epistyle: while on his second journey the temple had disappeared, and its marbles had been broken and thrown into the lime-kiln. The same fate was shared by the temple of Vespasian, the inscription of which, composed of seventy-four let-

[1] Lanciani: *l'Aula e gli ufficii del Senato Romano.* Rome, Salviucci, 1883.

ters, has been since reduced to a fragment of the last word (R E S T I *tuerunt*).

On the opposite side of the ascent is still extant the colonnade of the temple of Saturn (rebuilt under the Christian rule), and farther on the portico of the Dii Consentes in its original state.[1] It is useless to say that the Senate House was saved by Saint Hadrian, the Offices of the Senate by Sancta Martina, the Temple of Concord by Saints Sergius and Bacchus, the temple of Saturn by the Redeemer, etc., because these Christianizations were made long after the temples had become tenantless and *res nullius*. If we considered the fact that fifty-nine temples are known to have survived the religious crisis of the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, we must absolve the rulers and the ruled from the accusation of having deliberately overthrown the sacred edifices with which the Seven Hills were dotted. When the Emperor Constantius was received with due solemnity in 357, he saw "along every street of the Eternal City the uninjured temples of the gods with their names inscribed on the pediments: and although himself a Christian, he showed a great spirit of toleration."

When Paul III, Farnese, made his famous search in 1546, within the Baths of Caracalla, their stock of statuary was almost intact. The account given by contemporary writers includes statues like the Flora, Glycon's Hercules, the group of Dirce, Atreus with the

[1] The inscription engraved on the epistyle of this portico attributes its construction or reconstruction to Vettius Agorius Prætextatus, one of the last champions of polytheism and the defender of the Vestals, who raised a statue in his honour in the *Atrium Vestæ* which I discovered in 1883. A new theory advanced by Dr. Anti (*Bull. Com.* 1921, p. 211) speaks of this statue as representing King Numa Pompilius, a rather fanciful identification.

THE HERCULES OF GLYCON, OR FARNESE HERCULES
One of the works of art preserved intact in the Baths of Caracalla

son of Thyestes, the so-called Vestal Tuccia, a colossal Pallas, a Venus, a Diana, an Hermaphrodite, bas-reliefs and friezes one thousand feet long, busts, columns of the rarest marbles, mosaics, bronze, cameos, medals, lamps, etc. And yet the search of Paul III was preceded and has been followed by others with no less astounding results, including my own discovery of a beautiful Venus, the hitherto unpublished photograph of which I append.

Given this state of things, it is evident that during the first barbaric invasions, and during the religious struggles of the fourth and fifth centuries, the statues and works of art of Caracalla's Baths suffered no damage: in fact, we have the evidence that the Baths continued to be in use long after Rome had become a Christian city.

One point of evidence is to be found in a tombstone of the fifth century found in 1821 in the farm of Tor Marancia (*Corpus*, VI, 9239) in which mention is made of a certain Cucumio *Capsararius de Antoninianas*. The other point is the discovery I made in 1911 — while laying out the Archæological Park — of an underground chamber where linen was washed in a crude fashion by letting a stream, or rather a jet, of water, force its way through the mass of sheets and towels piled up in one or more basins.

How different this arrangement was from what, in older times, must have constituted the most difficult branch of the administration of the Imperial Baths! There were eleven of them, besides nine hundred and twenty-six smaller ones, conducted by private enterprise. Caracalla's alone could accommodate at the same time sixteen hundred bathers: those of Diocletian, thirty-six hundred. Taking fifteen hundred as an average number, and supposing that the crowd of clients changed five

times a day, each client using two linen sheets or towels, we come to the astounding conclusion that one hundred and sixty-five thousand pieces must have been washed and ironed or mangled in the space of twenty-four hours. Such a feat was impossible. It is true that the Corporation addicted to this branch, under the title of "Collegium Fullonum," may have numbered many hundred or even thousand washers: it is true that the establishment, where they operated, was an institution of State, officially called "Castrum" on account of its great extent and importance: still, the impossibility of cleaning, drying, and rolling the immense stock of linen remains the same. The explanation must be sought, I believe, in the habit of well-to-do citizens to carry and make their own linen. In Part II of the sixth volume of the "Corpus" many *fullones* are registered among the staff of servants of Livia, of the sons of Drusus the Elder, of Marcellus, of the Statilian and Publilian families. Private individuals had their own *fullones*, sometimes in their own house, sometimes in their suburban villa, besides those conducted by private speculators.

From these considerations concerning the preservation and exhibition in the (eleven) public thermæ of images of pagan gods, long after the Christianization of the city, we may deduce that anti-pagan laws and constitutions were never obeyed to the letter, at least in Rome and its district. One proviso, only, seems to have been adhered to: the confiscation of the revenues of pagan priesthoods, from which the State Department of Finance was wont to find occasional relief for the chronic exhaustion of the Treasury. The same system has been followed by France and Italy when on the verge of bankruptcy: in fact, a new department was instituted with us, under the title of "Asse Ecclesiastico," for the

THE VENUS OF CARACALLA'S BATHS

confiscation of church and monastic property worth many hundred millions. The finances of Italy were saved, but the means adopted to gain such result were not acceptable to many of us.

As regards the statues of gods, these were either left standing in their respective temples for purely artistic considerations, or removed to public buildings, such as theatres, thermæ, forums, parks, markets, and porticoes. A certain number were purposely buried for fear of barbaric depredations; or else concealed "in abditis locis" to save them from outbursts of Christian revenge. A few were thrown into the Tiber. There is no need to state that this question concerns only bronze statues, which excited the greed of barbarians and Christians alike. Those carved in marble, being of no practical use for commercial purposes, were let alone, save in a few exceptional cases.

Each one of these groups deserves a brief illustration.

I. STATUES LEFT STANDING IN THEIR OWN TEMPLES

Zosimus relates that, some time after the secularization of the House and Temple of Vesta, the young Princess Serena took possession of a precious necklace which still ornamented the statue of the goddess. The circumstance is thus described by the historian: "Rome being besieged by Alaric, the Senators began to suspect Serena of secret connivance with the barbarians. The suspicion nevertheless was unfounded, for Serena never dreamed of opening the gates to the enemy: but she was doomed to expiate her sacrilege against the gods. When Theodosius II entered Rome, after the defeat of Eugenius and the temples were closed forever, Serena manifested the desire to enter one of them, namely, the shrine of Rhea (Vesta). Here she was so captivated by the beauty

of the goddess's necklace that she took it with her own hands and fastened it on her own neck. An old woman, the last surviving Vestal, having witnessed by chance the profanation, cursed the Princess, and predicted that sooner or later she would expiate her crime. The old Vestal had told the truth. Serena died by strangulation!"

To the same class of statues left in their original places belong, in a certain sense, those of Menander and Poseidippos, discovered at the time of Sixtus V in the garden of the nuns of San Lorenzo in Panisperna, between the church of that name and that of Santa Pudentiana. They were found inside a round edifice of white marble, the plan of which I have published in Volume XXXII of the "Bullettino Archeologico Municipale." The "vulgus profanum" gave to the statues the names of Marius and Sulla, a curious mistake, indeed, considering that the name of Poseidippos was engraved on the plinth of one of the two figures. The other has since been identified as Menander. These images of the two leading Greek playwriters bear two special signs, namely, a metal peg on the top of the head, which must have supported something like a crown or a crescent; and metal shoes covering the original feet of marble. These signs, taken into consideration with the fact that the faces of the comedians have been somehow tampered with, have led some archæologists to believe that both had been altered into figures of saints, and worshipped in the church of San Lorenzo in Panisperna close by. The supposition is groundless. The couple had never been removed from their original place before the time of Sixtus V: and the pegs were meant to support, not a halo of sanctity, but one of those metallic crescents which the ancients used to fasten to the heads of statues exposed to the open air, to protect them from being soiled by birds. More diffi-

THE POSEIDIPPOS DISCOVERED BY SIXTUS V

cult is it to explain the case of the bronze shoes. It is probable, however, that, the figures having been placed originally at the entrance of the theatre of Bacchus in Athens, where the throng of people was the thickest, the projecting feet were protected from friction, just as Michelangelo's Christ in Santa Maria sopra Minerva has been protected from the effects of excessive kissing by the same means of a metal overshoe. The usefulness of this precaution is proved by the fact that the projecting foot of Saint Peter in the Vatican has become almost shapeless from the incessant friction of the lips of worshippers.

To the same group of statues left in their original places, as simple works of art, belongs, very likely, the fascinating Venus of the Capitol. Bartoli is the only archæologist of the time of Clement X (1670–76) who mentions its discovery: "In the valley between the Quirinal and the Viminal, in the gardens of the Stati family, a statue of Venus, six feet high, has been discovered, as beautiful as the Medici Venus, and in a perfect condition. In the same place were found mosaic pavements, busts, and other statues." Ficoroni confirms the above statement. "The beautiful Venus of Parian marble," he says, "now in the Stati Palace, is supposed to have been discovered in their orchard, opposite the Church of San Vitale (where the Via Modena now runs)." Helbig in his "Collections of Antiques in Rome," [1] declares: "I have not been able to trace the source of the statement repeated in various handbooks that the statue was found walled up like a treasure." The inscription engraved on the plinth mentions the gift of the statue by Benedict XIV to the Museum of the Capitol, but gives no clue as to its previous fate.

[1] Vol. I, pp. 338 n.. 456.

I have witnessed other instances of sacred images which have found shelter in their respective temples, until fire, or decrepitude, or violence, or earthquakes made the roof cave in, and the whole edifice collapse. In January, 1872, near the pronaos of the "Ædes magnæ Deûm matris" (temple of Cybele) on the Palatine, the semi-colossal statue of the goddess was found, together with about sixty fragments of columns, capitals, bases, entablature, and pediment, which, if properly put together and reëstablished in their former position, [1] would make this temple one of the most beautiful ruins of the Palatine. The statue is headless, probably in consequence of some deed of violence; but has been identified by means of the "suppedaneum" or footstool, which the ancients gave to Cybele, as a symbol of the stability of the earth.

A fourth case of the same nature comes within the field of personal experience. One glorious spring day of the year 1868, Visconti, then leading the excavations of Ostia, and myself his pupil, were summoned to the "Campus Sacer Matris Deûm" (the sacred field of Cybele) by the excited overseer, on account of a great find which was being made. What we saw, on running to the spot, was the recumbent statue of Atys Menotyrannus, slowly emerging from the bed of rubbish, upon which it had rested for sixteen centuries, as fresh, as intact as it must have appeared the day it was first placed on its altar. This exquisite figure, together with the bronze one of Venus Clotho, found in the same room, are now exhibited in the Lateran Museum.[2]

From these discoveries, and from many more of the same nature, which I omit to mention for the sake of

[1] As Huelsen has done in design. *Mittheil.* 1895, pp. 10–12.

[2] Compare Helbig, *Guide*, vol. II, p. 32.

THE VENUS CLOTHO FROM OSTIA

brevity, one deduction is clear. If the works of art preserved in pagan temples escaped damage or destruction, all the more reason that the temples themselves should have withstood the outburst of hatred and vengeance. Their preservation, besides, was soon after insured by the substitution of Christian for pagan worship. It is true that we have no evidence of temples being transformed into churches previous to A.D. 526,[1] but this confirms the theory of an exceedingly mild revolution. Early Christians as well as barbarians can be absolved from the accusation of systematic destruction of pagan Rome.

II. STATUES OF GODS TRANSFERRED FROM TEMPLES TO CIVIC BUILDINGS

With the advent of Christianity, as the official religion of the Empire, permission was given to the prefects of the City to remove from temples, the doors of which had already been closed, statues of gods, to whom divine honours had been rendered under the pagan rule, so as not to deprive the people of the sight and enjoyment of their favourite masterpieces. This transfer of statues to civic buildings, such as theatres, markets, thermæ,

[1] The dedication in 526 of the "templum Sacræ Urbis" under the patronage of the two holy physicians from the East, Cosmas and Damianus, cannot be quoted against my statement, because the building had nothing to do with cult or worship (as the name seems to imply), but was destined to contain the archives of the "cadastre," maps and surveys of the Empire, plans of the principal cities, results of censuses, and the like. In its dedication to Cosmas and Damianus we find an instance of religious contagion rather common in Rome, and rather difficult to explain. It concerns certain saints *à la mode* only for a certain period of time. What interest could the Romans of the Middle Ages feel in connection with these holy brothers of whose birth, country, and death they knew little or nothing? And yet not less than nine churches were inscribed under their names: namely, Santi Cosmas and Damianus, in "Mica Aurea de Monte Granato, in Silice, ad Præsepe, de via Lata, ad Asinum frictum, de Banchis, of the Barbers, and de Pinea."

parks, porticoes, and forums, was not done at random, but systematically and methodically. With the help of the valuable records published in Volume VI of the "Corpus Inscriptionum" (p. 536 sq. n. 1651–72), we can reconstruct the process of spoliation on one side, and endowment on the other. Thus we find that, as early as A.D. 331–34, Anicius Paulinus and his kinsman Anicius Amnius had chosen the newly erected Thermæ Decianæ on the Aventine as a repository for the images of the ex-gods, a scheme completed nearly a century later (A.D. 414) by the restorer of the Thermæ Cæcina Decius. Another builder of public baths (on the Esquiline), Næratius Cerialis, prefect A.D. 352, decorated the structure in the same way. Passiphilus Paulinus in A.D. 355 and Hermogenianus Olybrius in 368 chose the Thermæ of Trajan; Gabinius Probianus, the Basilica Julia, and Fabius Titianus the section of the Sacred Way which ascends from the Forum to the arch of Titus. The most energetic despoiler of temples seems to have been Flavius Eurycles Epitincanus, prefect in 450, who crowded with masterpieces the Forum Esquilinum and the Market of Livia.

Some of these records contain valuable historical information: for instance, the pedestal of Castalius Audax,[1] found near the arch of Titus, speaks of a certain number of statues overthrown, or damaged, or removed during a barbaric invasion, which statues Castalius had set up again after the retreat of the invaders. Now this is the only existing epigraphic document of the pillage of Genseric, King of the Vandals, the most terrible of all the destroyers of Rome (A.D. 455). Again, when Pope Julius III was laying out the beautiful Villa Giulia, a pedestal was found, the inscription of which

[1] *Corpus*, VI, n. 1663.

describes how a statue of Minerva, set up in the court of honour of the Senate House, broken and overthrown during the revolution of 483, had been restored and set up again on its pedestal by the prefect, Anicius Faustus.

The same line of policy was followed under the rule of good King Theodoric, as shown by another pedestal found near the church of Santa Maria in Domnica, the modest and simple inscription of which says:[1] "In the reign of our Lord Theoderic, Constantius' illustrious Senator has dedicated . . ." (object not specified). We learn from these documents and from the examination of the marks of pegs and sockets left on the plinths, first: that the great majority of the statues removed by the prefects were cast in bronze: secondly, that every famous Greek artist was represented in this array of unrivalled works. In fact, if we add to the series the three hundred and twenty-four "pretiosissima simulacra," placed by Augustus and his successors at the crossings of the main thoroughfares, we understand and appreciate the expression so often used by describers of ancient Rome, that it contained a population of marble and bronze almost equal to the living one. It is true that a very small percentage of the plinths, inscribed with the name of the artist, has been as yet found: still we have already learned certain interesting particulars; for instance: that as late as the year 377 A.D. there were added to the treasures of the Basilica Julia three works, one by Polycletus, one by Timarchus, the third by Praxiteles. It is impossible to divine what subjects they represented and whose images they were, because the post-Constantinian prefects, who are responsible for the transfer, never mention the name of a god.

[1] *Corpus*, VI, n. 1665.

III. STATUES PURPOSELY BURIED OR CONCEALED

An anonymous writer of the fifth century [1] speaks of furtive concealments of statues, and addresses to their authors the words of Isaiah (II, 18–21): "And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the Earth, . . ." but to no purpose. I have myself seen a cave in Mauretania, from the innermost recesses of which many idols were taken out: and we all know that the same thing has happened in other cities and provinces of the Empire; for instance, at Gaza, where, in the time of the Emperor Arcadius, the Christian mob was induced by Saint Porphyrius to set on fire the sanctuary of Marnas. The attendant priests, however, had already buried deep under ground their idols and sacred utensils, thus securing them from robbery and destruction. Edmond LeBlant, in a communication addressed to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, on November 7, 1887, under the title "De quelques statues cachées par les anciens," deals almost exclusively with the cases of the Venus of Milo, the Venus of the Capitol, and the Mastai Hercules; but their number is far greater and, as I am in some instances the only surviving witness of their rediscovery, I may be excused if I appeal to personal recollections.[2]

LeBlant starts from a wrong supposition. He believes the hiding of statues to have been the consequence of acts of violence threatened or perpetrated by Christians

[1] *Liber de promissionibus et prædictionibus*, in Migne, P. L. 51, 833 seq.

[2] My personal recollections comprise the finding of the Mastai Hercules, now in the Vatican; of the two bronze athletes, now in the Museo delle Terme; of the Niobides of the Garden of Sallust; of the Commodus of the Lamian Gardens; of the Rhea of the Ager Veranus, and of many smaller works.

as a revenge for having been constrained to offer sacrifices to the cursed (*sic*) images of the gods. A regular search for them was organized among the half-abandoned sanctuaries, "siège impur des faux dieux, des débris desquelles on croyait voir échapper des noirs démons. On les arrachait à leur bases, pour les jeter brisées dans les cloaques, dans des puits, dans les flammes, ou dans des eaux profondes." And he believes to have found support for his theory in a "fresque grossière trouvée il y à quelques années aux catacombes romaines." This remarkable picture is here reproduced from de Rossi's *Bullettino Cristiano* of 1864.

In the year 1864, he says, a crypt was discovered in a catacomb underneath the farm of the "Tre Madonne"

CHRISTIAN BOYS OVERTHROWING A PAGAN STATUE

outside the Porta Salaria, on the white plaster of which a boy or an ignorant "*fossor*" had sketched such Biblical scenes as a dweller in catacombs must have become necessarily familiar with. One scene, however, is quite original, and without comparison. It represents the overthrowing of a heathen statue. One boy is trying to

deface it by hammering it with a stone: the other to overthrow it by means of a rope tied round the neck. Such acts — granted that the interpretation suggested by de Rossi be true — were considered illegal, even under the strict rule of the Emperor Theodosius. If some later laws seem to contradict the policy of toleration advocated in the fourth century, they concern not Rome, but Africa, not all idols, but only those which had no artistic merit. Prudentius himself, hard moralist as he was, does not hesitate to put in the mouth of Saint Lawrence, while on the gridiron, the prophecy that the images of gods surrounding the scene of his execution would soon lose their prestige and become simple works of art.

The search for hidden bronzes or marbles was sometimes undertaken by Government officials of high rank. Thus, Valerius Palladius, governor of Venetia and Istria (379–83), claims to have replaced *in celeberrimo Fori loco* at Verona, a statue which for a long period of time had been hidden in the Capitol of the same city.[1] Æmilius Rufinus, Governor of Campania, about the same time declares that he had set up at Beneventum, *in loco celeberrimo ad ornatum publicum*, another statue, *in abditis locis repertam* (which had been buried in a secret corner[2]).

A third magistrate, Satius Clemens, boasts of having replaced in the public baths (also of Beneventum) some celebrated piece of statuary.[3] Audentius Æmilianus, Governor of the same province, Campania, having re-

[1] *Corpus*, IX, n. 1530.

[2] *Ibid.*, n. 1563. The Christian responsible for the deed of concealment was probably named Euresius, because on the side of the plinth of one of the images a rough hand had written: "Euresius, may you always remain faithful to God."

[3] *Ibid.*, n. 1588.

discovered several other masterpieces hidden at or near Capua, gave them a place of honour in the same baths. Neapolitan archæologists have supposed that Audentius may have found them at Herculaneum or at Pompeii: I think the supposition groundless and in contradiction of facts ascertained during the modern excavations at both places. At all events, this revival of admiration of classic statuary was not confined to Campania. "Inscription," n. 329, speaks of Volusius Venustus, Governor of Apulia and Calabria, as having located "statuas ornatui porticus ob amorem patriæ." One thing must be borne in mind: that the Gentiles, during those eventful years of danger and persecution, never lost their hope of a better future. They considered the victory of the Church as precarious and ephemeral, and secreted their gods with the conviction that — at no distant date — they would regain possession of their altars. And they did regain it at the time of Julian the Apostate,[1] although only for a brief lapse of two or three years. Concerning this rather antipathetic Prince it may interest the reader to have some information about the colossal bust discovered, or rather noticed for the first time, by Francis Lenormant in the course of his travels in southern Italy.[2]

This bust forms the glory and pride of Acerenza, a small Calabrian town near Potenza. The fact that it is located on the top of the cathedral, as if it were the image of the protecting saint of the city, amounts, so to speak, to an historical joke. Lenormant explains it, supposing that Acerenza may have been one of the few towns in which the polytheistic revival, enforced by

[1] Flavius Claudius *Julianus*, son of Julius Constantius and Basilina, b. 331; Cæsar, 355; Emperor at Paris, 360; sole Emperor, 361; killed in battle against the Persians, 363.

[2] *A travers l'Apulie et la Lucanie*, vol. I, p. 271.

Julian, found particular favour. To the young Emperor was, therefore, erected a statue (the head alone being preserved) on the pedestal of which was inscribed the following dedication: "To the Restorer of the Roman World, to our Lord Claudius Julianus Augustus Prince forever." The probability that this unique bust may represent the likeness of the arch-enemy of Christ is strengthened by a curious circumstance. The patron saint of Acerenza, and the titular of its church, Saint Carius, was Bishop of *Juliana* in northern Africa. His body was transferred to Calabria by fugitives from the Arabs, together with a fragment of the original inscription containing the letters . . . VLIAN . . . which belonged to the title IVLIAN*ensis Episcopus*, and not to the Emperor IVLIANus. Thus the Apostate was twisted into a martyr, a saint, and a heavenly protector of Acerenza. The features, as they appear in the accompanying illustration, seem to correspond well enough with the iconographic description given by Gregory of Naziantium, and by Ammianus Marcellinus, who accompanied the Emperor in the fatal Persian campaign. However, while Reinach and Lenormant recognize the authenticity of the portrait,[1] Gaetano Negri, the recent biographer of Julian,[2] hesitates to accept it, on account of certain discrepancies concerning the goatee which is missing — as well as the woolly soft hair, and the general expression, more becoming to a commander-in-chief than to a student of religious and philosophical problems.

Several hiding-places of bronze objects and statues have been found in my time. They were hidden at a considerable depth in caves, cellars, crypts, and rubbish:

[1] Compare *Revue archéologique*, 1914, p. 187.
[2] *L'imperatore Giuliano.* Studio Storico, Milan, Hoepli, 1914.

THE BUST OF ACERENZA BELIEVED TO REPRESENT JULIAN THE APOSTATE

then, for reasons which it would be difficult to specify, they were forgotten, or left in such condition by the collapse of the buildings above that they could not be reached again. Such was the fate of the nest of imperial bronze heads discovered in 1881 in the foundations of the English Church in the Via del Babuino, the contents of which were sold by the Reverend Doctor Wasse to the antiquarian Scalambrini.[1] Another case in point concerns the finding of an exquisite group of images of gods and goddesses, from a *lararium*, or private chapel of a Roman palace, discovered by the Marchesa Capranica del Grillo (Ristori) near Trajan's Forum, at the corner of the Via di Sant' Eufemia and the Via Nazionale, and sold to Corvisieri, the eminent paleographer, and dealer in antiquities.

In 1849, a few weeks before the storming of Rome by the French army of General Oudinot, another cache was discovered under the house, 17, Vicolo delle Palme, in Trastevere, comprising a marble copy of the Apoxyomenos of Lysippus, now in the "Braccio Nuovo"; the bronze horse, now in the Conservatori Palace; a bronze foot pertaining to the rider of the horse; a bronze bull, and many other fragments of less importance.

In the small cloisters of the former monastery of San Nicolò à Cesarini there are remains of a round temple, with fluted columns of tufa (*Lapis ruber*) coated with white plaster. This architectural gem of Republican times, dedicated to Hercules the "Great Custodian" (*Magnus Custos*), stands in the same relation to the Circus Flaminius in which the other round temple of Hercules "the Invincible" (*Invictus*) stood to the Circus Maximus. Both were oracular gods, both were

[1] Compare *Ancient Rome*, p. 297.

cast in heavily gilt bronze, both were carefully concealed under the stress of some imminent danger, and both were rediscovered in perfect preservation, together with the temples in which they had been worshipped. Vitruvius, speaking of such temples, contends that they ought to be erected near gymnasiums, amphitheatres, and circuses, thus placing the god of strength in a relation, first, to athletes; secondly, to gladiators; lastly, to charioteers. In Rome, however, race-runners were his favourites. There was, in fact, a third sanctuary outside the Porta Portese (where the new Maremma railway station has been lately built), of a different type, but revealing the same sense of devotion toward the god of strength and sport. It was an artificial cave hewn out of the rock, with the figure of "Resting Hercules" (*Hercules Cubans*) at the bottom of the crypt, toward which a double line of famous charioteers seemed to be advancing, in a thankful attitude for their success in the track, or in the ring. The birthday of the god, which fell on February 1st, was celebrated with special events, while other races were run on June 4th near the Porticus Minucia, before another colossal bronze figure of Hercules, which has not yet been rediscovered. We possess but scanty information about the finding of the Hercules Invictus, *ad duodecim portas*, so named because it stood near the twelve carceres of the Circus Maximus, a find which took place at the time of Sixtus IV (1471–84). Baldassare Peruzzi is the only specialist who has kept valuable records of this event, which de Rossi made known to students in 1854.[1] The finding of the "Magnus Custos" took place on August 8, 1864, near the Piazza di Campo de' Fiori, in the foundations of the Palazzo Pio-Righetti, which stands on the ruins of Pompey's theatre. The colossus

[1] Compare *Annali Instituto* of that year, p. 28.

THE BRONZE SATYR OF MÂHDIA

was lying in a deep cavity between two walls of stone blocks, roofed over with slabs of Portasanta marble, placed one against the other like roof tiles. There was no doubt that its concealment had taken place after the mob had attempted to mutilate and evirate the manly figure: therefore I feel justified in classifying it among the works of art purposely hidden under the stress of an impending calamity.

The chance that further discoveries of classic bronzes will be made in Rome and elsewhere seems well-nigh hopeless, unless some kind of miracle should happen like the one which has made the village of Mâhdia famous in the archæological world. Of course, I do not include in this avowal of exhaustion the bed of the Tiber, which is and will be for a long period of years the richest hunting-ground for seekers of bronzes, a mighty reservoir of antiquities which seems to be inexhaustible.[1]

However, to return to Mâhdia. In June, 1897, while the crew of a local boat were fishing for sponges about five miles off the shore, one of the divers thought he saw guns half buried in the sand at a depth of one hundred and twenty feet. The captain of the plucky little craft dived at once to investigate the case, and found the remains of a Greek vessel which must have foundered many centuries ago, while sailing around the coast of Numidia, together with its precious cargo of exquisite bronzes and marbles of pure Greek workmanship. Professor Alfred Merlin, Director of Antiquities and Fine Arts of the Regency of Tunis, instituted at once a regular search which, alas, was soon interrupted by the outbreak of the World War. He had also prepared for publication a volume entitled "Les fouilles sous-marines de Mâhdia." Both the submarine research and the publi-

[1] See *Ancient Rome*, p. 307.

cation of the volume will soon be resumed in collaboration with Professor Louis Poinssot, who has succeeded in the mean time to the Directorship of Tunisian antiquities, and to whose kindness I owe the charming photographs here reproduced.

The first represents a satyr about to start for a race. The action is wonderfully expressed by the dilated nostrils, by the slightly open mouth, and by the thrust of the body, the weight of which is carried forward so as to ease the effort of the spring.

Next comes a marble bust of Aphrodite, whose skin appears damaged by the boring of mollusks; yet the features remain beautiful, especially if seen in profile. It is possible that the head alone was buried in sand or soft mud, while the shoulders and breast were exposed to the corrosive action of salt water.

The best piece is a Herma of Dionysos, the work of Boëthos the Chalcedonian, whose name is engraved on the right arm. The head has a Babylonian cast of features, the hair and beard being coiled in locks. It is a characteristic work of the second century B.C.[1] I understand that another campaign of exploration has just led to the discovery of a large number of columns and capitals; of a bronze bust of Athena; and of a set of candelabra, described and illustrated by Merlin and Poinssot in "Revue archéologique," Juillet-Octobre, 1921.

Much speculation has been rife concerning this ship, its valuable cargo, the circumstances, and the approximate date of the wreck: whether it represents the pillage of an Ægean island, or even of Corinth, conquered by Sulla. Perhaps the stock was purchased or stolen by a

[1] The catalogue of these and other pieces is to be found in Merlin's volume.

THE HEAD OF APHRODITE FROM MÂHDIA

private collector, or by a wealthy Roman trader for the adornment of his Numidian villa: for several such establishments, endowed with beautiful works of art, have lately been explored along the coast, at Sliten, at Misurata, etc.

I shall bring this chapter to a close with the account of the burial, not of bronze but of marble figures, done with the same object in view, namely, to save them from injury or destruction.

Among the works of art which rendered the Gardens of Sallust an ideal museum, where nature and human skill and ingenuity played an equally leading part, to fascinate the visitors, there were two groups of statuary, one representing the fate of the Niobides, the other the chasing away of the Gauls from the Kingdom of Attalus. Both groups were buried by the park keepers (*vilici hortorum Sallustianorum*); both have been recovered after many centuries; both have been transferred from their artificial graves to public and private Renaissance museums, without any need of restoration. Such was the case of the Dying Gaul (the so-called *Gladiatore moribondo* of the Capitoline Museum); of the other Gaul killing himself and wife (the so-called "Arria and Paetus" of the Ludovisi Gallery). Such also was the fate of the Borghese Hermaphrodite, so perfect in its modelling and preservation that Cardinal Scipione Borghese built at his own expense the façade of the church of the Vittoria to gain its possession. In 1714–20, from among the ruins of the Egyptian "summer house" which had been excavated near the temple of the Venus Sallustiana, four perfect statues of Egyptian style were brought to light. Leaving aside several other figures of the sons and daughters of Niobe,

discovered in the Piazza Sallustio and since transferred to the Ny-Carlsberg Museum at Copenhagen, I shall never forget, as one of the pleasantest recollections of my career, the morning of June 4, 1909, when I was shown into a crypt or underground corridor, thirty-five feet below the level of the piazza just mentioned, which no human being had entered for 1476 years. Here had been walled up one of the young Niobides, struck between the shoulder blades by the divine arrow of Diana; and, as the vaulted ceiling of the crypt was lower than the height of the statue, the projecting right arm had been detached from the shoulder and laid carefully at the feet of the maiden. Bartoli, the antiquarian, relates that while Father Luke Wadding was building the foundations of the church of San Isidoro, within the boundaries of the same Sallustian Gardens, five hidden statues were discovered and sold to Cardinal Francesco Barberini. Pirro Ligorio speaks of a "number of life-size statues belonging to the myth of Niobe" as found in the sixteenth century in the same neighborhood.

Here, then, we have the evidence that at a given moment, and under the fear of imminent danger, the keepers of the Sallustian Park (and probably of the neighboring Acilian and Lucullæan Parks) buried some of the more important works of art. The date and the occasion of this wholesale process of concealment are given by Procopius, in "Vandals" (Vol. I, p. 2), where he describes the storming of the Porta Salaria by the Goths of Alaric, and the burning and pillaging of the Gardens of Sallust on August 10, A.D. 410.

The most conspicuous and characteristic instance of delicate and effective concealment has been found lately in the excavations of the Syrian Sanctuary on the Janiculum, on the border-line of the Villa Wurts, once

HERMA OF DIONYSOS, BY BOËTHOS, FOUND AT MAHDIA

included within the limits of the Gardens of Cæsar. It has been illustrated in a masterly way by MM. Nicole, Darier, and Gauckler in a series of publications, of which twelve are on my desk while I write, and eighty-one are registered in the "Bibliographie chronologique," published by Darier in 1920. The sanctuary must have come to grief in 377, as a consequence of the decree of suppression of mysterious lodges issued by Gracchus, prefect of the City, which put an end to the practice of foreign superstition in Rome.

To such an incident in the enthralling history of this Syrian sanctuary, Gauckler attributes the studious concealment, two feet below the floor, of its beautiful images of gods. One, absolutely perfect, represents a youthful Bacchus with the head and hands heavily gilded. Perhaps the figure was dressed in rich Eastern clothing, like some of the popular Saints and Madonnas in Italian villages. Together with the Dionysus lay buried an exquisite figure of a young Pharaoh, believed to be an original Egyptian work of the Saitic School. The statue, sculptured in black basalt, must have been knocked from its pedestal by a heavy blow on the forehead, which disfigured the nose and the lips, breaking at the same time the body into five or six pieces, which, however, were piously collected by some one and buried in the apse.[1]

In another cache of the same sanctuary a third figure was found, cast in bronze and heavily gilded, representing either a Mithriac Kronos or the Syrian goddess Atagartis, wound in the coils of a serpent, for the sustenance of which seven eggs had been placed near at hand.

For further information on this subject I refer the

[1] See *Wanderings in the Roman Campagna*, pp. 175–77.

reader to Chapter XII of my "Ancient Rome," and especially to pages 297–305, in which a full account is given of the concealment and rediscovery of the two Bronze Athletes, the pride and glory of the National Museum in Diocletian's Baths.

The last and most momentous crisis in the religious and political warfare of Rome took place in the year 394, as described in an anonymous poem, discovered by Delisle in Codex 8084 of the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. The poem is a libel against Nicomachus Flavianus, leader of the pagan aristocracy in the Senate House, the supporter of Eugenius the Usurper, and of Arbogastes, the murderer of Valentinian II. At the outbreak and all during the rebellion, the most disgusting and obsolete rites were revived. Nicomachus devoted three months to the performance of the lustration of Rome; he indited the *Iustitium* and the *Amburbium*, practices which had fallen into oblivion since the days of Aurelian; he celebrated the *Isia*, shedding tears over the mystic death of Osiris; the *Megalesia* in honour of the "Great Mother of the Gods," a rite imported from Phrygia; the *Criobolia* and the *Taurobolia*, profane imitations of our baptism and confirmation; and the unspeakable *Floralia*, for the celebration of which he appears to have built *ex novo* a temple near the present Barberini Palace. At last this fanatic rebel was killed in the battle of Aquileia, in 394.

As regards the apostates who, during the revolution sided with Nicomachus, for sheer cowardice three names must be placed at the head of the list — Hierius, orator and philosopher, to whom Saint Augustine dedicated in 381 his juvenile book "De pulchro et apto"; Leucadius, administrator of State properties in Africa; and Marcianus, proconsul of the same province.

Vivid records of this revolution are to be found in the annals of recent archæological research. First of all comes the discovery in the Forum of Trajan of a marble pedestal, upon which once stood the statue of the pagan leader, Virius Nicomachus Flavianus. It was found in 1849 on the steps of the Basilica Ulpia. Its long inscription [1] describes how the statue had been overthrown by the populace after the battle of Aquileia, A.D. 394, and how it had been restored to its former place of honour, by the kindness and good-will of Theodosius and Valentinian III.

The second discovery is even more impressive. It was made in 1885–87 on the Cœlian Hill in the garden formerly of Sartorio Teofili and now occupied by the Central Military Hospital. I do not remember ever having seen such another scene of devastation as that presented by the remains of the palace of the Symmachi and of the Nicomachi. Columns, friezes, bas-reliefs, statues, seem to have been purposely hammered and almost pulverized. There was a headless female figure of grey basalt, now in the Municipal Antiquarium, reconstructed out of seventy-four pieces. If we consider that basalt was a worthless material to the destroyers, unfit for the lime-kiln, and too hard to be worked anew, we must find another reason for such wanton treatment. The explanation is given, if I am not mistaken, by the discovery within the same palace of another statue of Victory — probably a copy of the one which stood in the Senate Hall — broken into one hundred and fifty-one pieces. No wonder that the mob, remembering the oratorical duel fought by Saint Ambrose on the Christian side and by Nicomachus on the pagan, and remembering also that the latter, as a haruspex, had predicted the im-

[1] *Corpus*, VI, 1583.

minent restoration of paganism, stormed and destroyed the beautiful Cœlian Palace. Valentinian did express his imperial regrets over the deed, but I am afraid they were not sincere, and were intended merely to disguise his inner satisfaction.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTANTINIAN BASILICA OF SAINT PETER

THERE is no denying that Constantine, moved by religious and political considerations, raised in Rome (and all through the Empire) a certain number of churches, some of which are still extant in their original shape, like Saint Lawrence's on the road to Tibur and Saint Agnes's on the Via Nomentana, while others have gone through many disfigurements and reconstructions like Saint Peter's on the Via Cornelia, Saint Paul's on the road to Ostia, Saint Saviour's at the Lateran, and the "Holy Cross" in the Varian Gardens. His advisers on religious matters, such as Pope Sylvester, did not choose at random the sites for these churches: their object was to pay honour to the most illustrious martyrs and confessors who had remained faithful to the Gospel "usque ad mortem," without touching, disturbing, or moving by one inch their graves. The observance of these rules made Constantine's work rather difficult, because in many cases, like those of Paul, Lawrence, and Agnes, the graves were facing banks of rock, honeycombed with catacombs, or were embedded in the rock itself, making it impossible to develop the basilica type in its due proportions. Saint Paul's coffin lay so near the spur of rock, overhanging the highroad to Ostia, that the basilica could be given only a diminutive size, at least in comparison with the size of Saint Peter's, which was raised on ground free on every side, without obstacles, natural or artificial, standing in Constantine's way. The graves of Lawrence and Agnes, likewise, lay so deep in the heart

of the tufa rock that, to pay homage to them, Constantine was compelled to destroy hundreds of others.

Another point deserving attention is the cheap and vulgar way in which these Constantinian churches were pieced together, with materials removed from older edifices. If we except the twelve fluted columns of Carystian marble (Portasanta) of the lower nave of Saint Lawrence's, and the similar ones in Saint Paul's, which must have been removed from one and the same structure of the Golden Age, all the rest was pure and simple patchwork, offensive to the artistic and æsthetic eye of a population familiar with the pure outline of the Basilicæ Æmilia, Julia, and Ulpia. The same free and easy behaviour was followed by Constantine in superposing his own structures on others, well known in the history of the City, and still used for a determined purpose. The "Mother and Head of all Churches," the Basilica Salvatoris in Lateranis,[1] stands partly over a wing of the imperial palace of Fausta, partly over the remains of the barracks of the "Equites Singulares," who, like our Life Guards, were devoted to the personal service of the Emperor. These barracks, discovered in 1729 in the foundations of the Corsini Chapel, were decorated with statues, busts, and works of art of every description, among which is the marble seat, now in the Corsini Library, considered to have been chiselled by a Greek artist.

This fact proves how indifferently the builders of the Basilica Salvatoris felt toward classic remains and their artistic treasures. More particulars on this subject — so strictly connected with the decline and fall of Imperial Rome — will be given in the following pages, in reference to the graves of Peter and Paul.

[1] *Omnium ecclesiarum Urbis et Orbis mater et caput.*

THE CORSINI CATHEDRA CHISELLED BY A GREEK ARTIST

THE GRAVE OF SAINT PETER

The sepulchre of the Prince of the Apostles on the Via Cornelia remained free, undisturbed, and known to but a restricted number of proselytes, until the reign of Heliogabalus (A.D. 218–22), who, among other extravagances, started in the Circus of the Vatican a race of chariots, each drawn by four elephants. As the ordinary track inside the hippodrome was obviously too narrow for such an experiment, a larger one was made ready outside, by removing or destroying some of the tombs and mausoleums of the Via Cornelia, which stood on the way. This is the only true, historical, genuine evidence we have of a *possible* removal of the remains of Saint Peter from the original crypt of the Vatican to a place of security. But even supposing this to have been the case, how can we account for the fact that the remains of other Bishops of Rome, buried close to Peter's coffin, were abandoned on the spot to be trampled by Heliogabalus' pachyderms? And again, how can we reconcile this surmise with the evidence that they were not disturbed at all, as proved by the plan drawn in 1635 by Benedetto Drei, the master mason of Paul V, the exactness and authenticity of which is certified by other eye-witnesses, such as Giovanni Severano, who mentions the discovery on page 20 of his "Memorie Sacre," and Francesco Torrigio, who was present at the exhumations, in company with Cardinal Evangelista Pallotta, and others.[1]

Leaving aside, therefore, the dubious evidence of the

[1] The discovery of pontifical graves next to Peter's is an undeniable fact: but the attribution of one of them to Linvs, the second Bishop of Rome (buried side by side with the Blessed Peter in the Vatican on October 24, A.D. 78, as the *Liber Pontificalis* asserts), is uncertain, owing to the possibility that the original and longer name, such as *anul*LINVS, *paul*LINVS may have been mutilated. Compare *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 132.

"Vita Elagabali" and other vague, obscure, uncertain, and contradictory stories collected by Monsignore Barnes in Chapter V of his excellent volume, "Saint Peter in Rome," we agree with him when he says that it is difficult, if not impossible, to put them into a consistent story. With that opinion I most emphatically agree. At the same time, while insisting on the fundamental fact that Peter's rest was never disturbed and his grave on the Via Cornelia never violated, I cannot deny an equally sure fact that near, or on the site of, the present church of Saint Sebastian there was a memorial, not of Peter alone, but of both the Princes of the Apostles, the sepulchral nature of which is still under discussion.

In my personal experience of archæological problems, which extends over half a century, I have never met with another case so much discussed, analyzed, sectioned, anatomized as this one concerning an indefinite *Memoria Apostolorum* at the third milestone of the Appian Way, marking the spot where their bodies are alleged to have been concealed once or twice during the Era of Persecutions.

The bibliography on this controversy is simply appalling. A dear and illustrious colleague, Professor Orazio Marucchi, has already treated the subject in eighteen articles, not without a promise of further investigations. If we add to Marucchi's series the writings of twenty other archæologists, whose names, for brevity's sake, I shall not mention, we have material enough to constitute a shelf of a special library. But the impression we receive from this riot of literature is neither pleasing nor satisfactory: it is, I dare say, rather debilitating and exhausting. These illustrious writers appear to us, impartial seekers of the truth, like partisans who, the more

THE VAULTED CEILING OF A COLUMBARIUM DISCOVERED UNDER THE CHURCH OF SAINT SEBASTIAN

they try to stop the holes of a sinking ship, or to prop with timber a disintegrating building, the more forcibly they make us think of the myths of Sisyphus or of the Danaïds. All this row has but one purpose, that of keeping alive a tradition which outsteps the limits of probability. Its partisans disagree on every point; on particulars as well as on the whole, on the *Platonia*, on the *Triclia*, on the Mausoleum of Quirinus, on the *Memoria Apostolorum*, on the footprints of the Apostles, on the house of Peter (*Domus Petri*), and on the Basilica of Saint Sebastian, without coming to an understanding.

The excavations in and near this Basilica of Saint Sebastian, made within the last four years, have revealed the existence of three strata of remains, the highest nearly level with the present pavement; the middle one seven feet deep; the third sunk at an astonishing depth. The topmost contains innumerable Christian graves; the middle contains the vestiges of a villa or hostelry with a terrace or pergola, such as are to be found in our suburban eating and drinking places; the lowest is mostly composed of columbaria of the Golden Age, of exquisite beauty and of excellent preservation.

It has been ascertained that no house of prayer, no church of any importance existed here before the time of Pope Damasus (366–84); that the grave of Sebastian (whose name was given to the basilica and to the City gate leading to it, at a much later period) did not occupy any place of honour in Damasus' scheme of the building, but only an obscure corner on the left aisle; and lastly that there exists such similarity between the plan and design of the monumental group of Saint Sebastian as represented in Fig. 1 and that of Saint Agnes (Fig. 2) that there must be a close connection between the two, chronological as well as architectural.

The most striking discovery made in the upper layer of remains, a few inches below the floor of the present

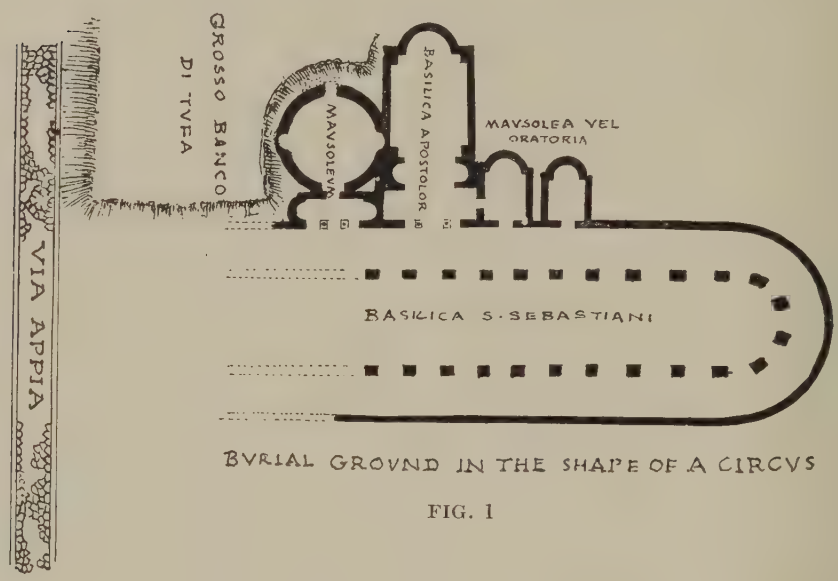


FIG. 1

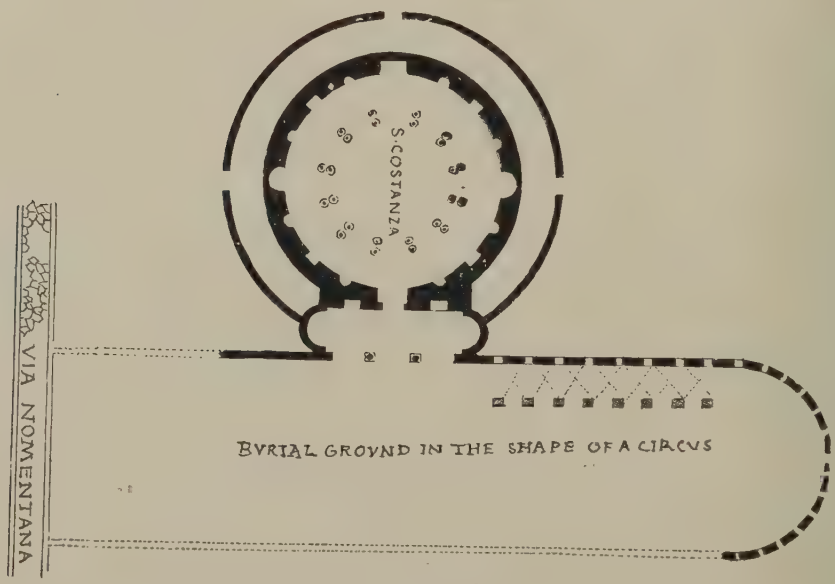


FIG. 2

church, is that of a rough stone coffin with an embalmed body within, wound with bands of linen, which had been dipped in a sweet-smelling essence; a sprig of evergreen lay across the breast. The body was identified by means of a rough and illiterate epitaph, saying "here lies the blessed Fabianus" (who governed the Church of Rome from January 10, 236, to January 20, 250).

The hostelry, which constitutes the second or middle stratum of superposed remains, contains, besides some living-rooms, a pergola or terrace, once covered with vines, from the parapet of which a beautiful view must have been enjoyed over the lower valley of the river Almo.

There is a seat or bench running round two sides of the terrace, painted in landscape style, representing a fence in trellis-work, interwoven with blossoming creepers, on which rest many varieties of birds. Parapet, benches, walls, and even the brick-plastered columns, which once supported the vines, are covered with *graffiti*, namely with names, phrases, invocations, signs, etc., scratched on the plaster with a nail or with the blade of a pocket knife. These *graffiti* have a direct bearing on the main controversy at issue, because they all point to the same fact, that at this precise spot, at the third milestone of the "Queen of Roads," there was *a something* which reminded the faithful and the pilgrims from beyond the seas, of the temporary residence, or of the preaching, or passion, or burial of Paul and Peter in Rome. But what was this *something?* What was the mysterious *Memoria Apostolorum?* It must be clearly understood that the place, on the walls of which the *graffiti* are scratched, is not the "Memoria" itself, but an open-air drinking-garden, adjoining the "Memoria," where the pilgrims, fatigued by a three-mile walk, could find refreshments. The Via Appia, the most popular

cemetery in the suburbs of Rome, boasted of quite a large number of these "*osterie di campagna*," where funeral banquets and potations could be ordered *à la carte*, by relatives and friends of the departed ones.

Ancient epitaphs often mention this practice. In Volume VI, n. 25061, of the "Corpus," the deceased says to the passer-by: "Come, friend, and bring a flask of wine, together with the necessaries for a potation." Evidence on this point will be found in Chapter I, pp. 41–43, of "Pagan and Christian Rome." I may add that this practice has lasted to my own days. I remember an *osteria* facing the public cemetery of San Lorenzo all' Agro Verano, and called, accordingly, "*Osteria delle Anime Sante del Purgatorio*" ("drinking place for the Blessed Souls in Purgatory"), where crowds of people used to assemble on All Souls' Day, November 2d, to drown their sorrow in generous wine, and to forget in alcoholic exhilaration the visit they had just paid to the graves of their dear ones. The anniversary feast of Saint Peter was for our forefathers what Christmas is for us, as regards luxury and joviality of banquets.

It may interest my reader to know that the glorious *osteria* by San Sebastiano has never ceased to live and prosper at the expense of pilgrims visiting the "Seven Churches," a place of honour always being given to it in the oldest views of the group "ad Catacumbas" published since the beginning of the sixteenth century. Already, since the Jubilee of 1450, John Capgrave, describing the shrine of Santa Maria de Palma (Domine quo vadis), calls it "a praty litil church and a place annexed thereto where is communly a taverne for the connfort of pilgrimes." [1] The tavern is still in existence

[1] John Capgrave: *Ye solace of pilgrimes*. Edited by C. A. Mills. Oxford, Frowde, 1911.

VIEW OF SAN SEBASTIANO WITH ITS OSTERIA AND MAUSOLEUMS ENGRAVED BY GIOVANNI MAGGI FOR THE JUBILEE OF 1600

with its picturesque porch, a subject dear to artists, especially to Domenichino, whose sketch in red chalk, formerly in my private collection, I have either lost or mislaid. As far as engravings are concerned, I have chosen to reproduce one of the best, by Giovanni Maggi, for the Jubilee of 1600.

I have already remarked that, leaving aside simple names, the majority of the *graffiti* deciphered on the walls and parapets of the verandah at Saint Sebastian's bear this sentence: "O Peter and Paul, do bear us in mind, who have come to this place to take refreshment in your honour." Apropos of which inscriptions we must observe:

First, that neither Peter nor Paul seems to have gained a decided local preference in the mind of the scratchers, there being forty invocations to *Paul* and Peter and thirty-eight to *Peter* and Paul.

Secondly, that the Latin language predominates over the Greek.

Thirdly, that by grouping names we learn that Greek pilgrims did not come one by one, but in *θεωρίαι*, or processions. I purposely use the adjective "Greek" or "Eastern" pilgrims because the *graffiti* are not written by Romans familiar with the Greek language, but by people who did not know any other language but their own. Two or three pilgrims alone show a command of both languages; for instance, the one who wrote: *πετρε ετ παυλλι ιν με(ν)τε αβετε*, followed by the antiphon *γρατιας αγαμους* (*Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro*); or the other who repeats the invocation *παυλε ετ πετρε ἰν μεντε νος* ABETE (bear us in mind).

In the fourth place, that the pilgrims who signed their names belonged to the lower classes. There is not one patrician or knight among the visitors, but plenty of

Gregorys and Anthonys and Johns, whose plebeian origin cannot be doubted.

The advocates of an alleged transfer of the Apostolic bodies from the quiet, secluded regions of the Via Cornelia and the Via Laurentina to the Via Appia, the most noisy, crowded, and dangerous road in times of persecution, seem to have forgotten another essential fact, that no human remains, whether inhumated or cremated, whether of a patrician or of a slave, whether of an Emperor or of a criminal, could be touched, or moved, or inspected without a grant from the Emperor (Pontifex Maximus), which was almost impossible to obtain. When Pliny the Younger was Governor of Bithynia, a Roman colonist applied to him to be allowed to transfer to a better place the body of a kinsman; but, although the granting of such a request came within the jurisdiction of the Governor, he thought it better to apply to the Emperor himself. We infer from the official correspondence on this subject [1] that even in the most remote provinces of the Empire human remains were sacred before the law, and that they could not be touched without a personal grant from the sovereign or from the supreme priesthood.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century a cippus was discovered near Rome, dedicated to the memory of a Marcus Ulpius Phedimus, a freedman dear to Trajan, who, although quite young, had been invested with many court duties, connected especially with the banqueting-hall. He followed his imperial master through the campaign of Parthia, and returned with him to Selinus of Cilicia, where he was struck with a fatal illness, and where he died on the 12th of August of

[1] Pliny's *Letters*, Book v, x, 68, 69.

the year 117. On February 5th of the year 130 — that is, thirteen years after his death — after an expiatory sacrifice had been performed, permission was granted by the Supreme Pontiff to remove the body to Rome. Now, if there was an officer in whose favour the strict regulations about interments could be mitigated, it was certainly this young courtier who had died, together with his beloved master, in a foreign land; yet thirteen years were required to negotiate the transfer of his remains to Rome. So much value was attributed to such a privilege that, in some cases, the man or the family to which it had been granted caused the whole correspondence to be engraved on the two sides of the door of the sepulchre. There is a splendid instance of this practice in the monument of Arrius Alpheus, freedman of Fadilla, mother of Antoninus Pius, discovered on the Via Clodia, a mile beyond the Milvian Bridge. Alpheus submitted to the Supreme Pontiff the following request: "Having lost within a short time my dear wife and my dear son, and having been obliged to lay them to rest hurriedly in a terracotta coffin, and having now completed the building of a suitable tomb, I beg of you to grant me permission to remove the bodies to their new place of rest. Nov. 15th, 155." The permission was given after a few days.

In the face of such stringent and inflexible regulations, how can we suppose that they should have been transgressed in the case of Saint Peter, and even more of Saint Paul, who was a Roman citizen? It is useless to repeat facts known to all. The body of Peter had been placed in a cell facing the Circus of Nero and surrounded by pagan mausoleums. The remains of Paul had, likewise, been buried under identical conditions in the field of death between the road to Ostia and the river. How

could the Christians frustrate or circumvent the law? It was not the question of carrying about a small and light cinerary urn, but a marble sarcophagus six or seven feet long, and weighing a couple of tons, for the transportation of which a cart drawn by a couple of oxen or mules had to be hired. We cannot possibly suppose that such an operation could be performed under the eyes of the police, who patrolled by day and by night each quarter and each street of the city, and who, in time of persecution, enlisted special detectives to coöperate with the force. We must also bear in mind that, before the construction of the walls and gates of Aurelian, whoever intended to steal the body of Peter had to overcome another obstacle: he had to cross twice the line of the octroi, once at the toll-house by the bridge of Nero, once at the bridge of the Appian Way on the river Almo. The publicans, or collectors of duties, would never have allowed such a burden to pass unnoticed. These considerations may appear vulgar and matter of fact, but the world has not changed; and if to-day it would be impossible to steal away a corpse from our cemetery of San Lorenzo, on the Via Tiburtina, and transfer it unnoticed, for instance, to that of Santo Spirito on the Janiculum, the same impossibility must be admitted for ancient times, especially for the Ages of Persecution.

The supporters of the legend concerning the temporary hiding of the two bodies at the third milestone of the Appian Way must face another improbability. The alleged stealers of the body of Peter, the breakers of the sacred laws preserving the inviolability of graves (even of criminals), would not have selected a hiding-place right under the windows of the outpost or station-house of the same Frumentarii, spies, detectives, secret agents, who played an odious and principal part in the

persecution and denunciation of Christians — and in the discovery of their secret meeting-places, of their cemeteries, and of their places of shelter. The epigraphic documents concerning a station-house of police at San Sebastiano were discovered in March, 1817, in the Vigna Capranica on the right of the road, between the church and the tomb of Metella. Another inscription belonging to the same police outpost was found in 1857 in the Vigna Grandi, on the other side of the road.

There is a last point worth consideration. I have already explained in my preceding volumes how, in the fourth century after Christ, underground lodges were established by the last champions of polytheism for the secret worship of Mithras, Cybele, Atys, Baal, Serapis, Astarte, and other Eastern gods, as near as possible to the most venerable sanctuaries of the new and the old faith. One has been found near Saint Peter's, a second under the Saint Clement, a third and a fourth near or under the Capitol, a fifth near Santa Maria in Domnica on the Cælian, and a sixth near the *Memoria Apostolorum* at San Sebastiano. The *Memoria* accordingly must be given a prominent place among the centres of Christian worship in Rome, and of hatred from the worshippers of Mithras.

What profane ceremonies were performed in these dens of mystery we may gather from the information we possess concerning human sacrifices, or, at least, concerning the drinking of human blood. Apropos of these obsolete superstitions, revived by the fanatics of the fourth and fifth centuries, a curious discovery has just been made in the Forum of Præneste: that of a new fragment of the Calendar of Verrius Flaccus containing these words: SANGVINEM GVSTARE ANTEA FREQVENTER SOLEBANT (they used to taste blood

frequently). Flaccus refers evidently to the prehistoric practice of drinking human blood, which was continued under Roman rule in a milder form by substituting the blood of animals for that of men. Thus the Arvalian Brotherhood, at their meeting on May 9th, would eat "*sanguinaccio*," or coagulated blood of piglets. Ancient Christian writers, such as Tertullian, Paulinus of Nola, Lactantius, and Prudentius, insist upon stating that even as late as the fourth century after Christ a culprit condemned to be devoured by the wild beasts in the amphitheatre was slain on the altar of Jupiter Latialis. According to Tertullian this horrible rite was celebrated in the heart of the city, on the Capitol, the blood of the victim being drunk by the attendant crowd. The same statement is made by Cyprian, who asserts that the warm blood of the victim was thrown into the face of the idol to quench his thirst. Some modern critics consider these assertions of the Fathers of the Church as most improbable, but we have further evidence concerning the bloody worship of other deities, such as Bellona, whose temple stood near the Circus Flaminius. Dion Cassius affirms that in the year B.C. 48 clay receptacles were found in the temple of the goddess, full of human flesh. Whether these mysterious performances were introduced into Rome at the time of Sulla the Dictator, with the worship of the Cappadocian Goddess Mâ, we are not able to decide. The fact remains, however, that in the last century of the Republic rites were performed in Rome dating from the cruel prehistoric ages. When we recall that under Caligula no chief priest could be appointed at Nemi unless he had slain his predecessor with his own hands, we cannot wonder that other remnants of such barbaric customs lasted as late as the fourth century. Christian apologists may have exagger-

ated, but their accusations cannot be considered as altogether the outcome of party feelings. The apologists, at all events, could quote the authority of Varro,[1] who accuses Catiline of having supplied the conspirators with a mixture of wine and human blood: and that of Cicero,[2] who accuses Vatinius of having eaten the *exta puerorum*. No wonder that such public acts of superstitious cruelty, abolished under the Empire, were perpetuated in the secrecy of underground lodges, the existence of which may or may not have been known to the police.

I have seen with my own eyes and touched with my own hands a relic of one of these human sacrifices in the *Sancta Sanctorum* of the Syrian national lodge, discovered in 1909 on the slope of the Janiculum near the lower gate of the Villa Wurts, as described in "Wanderings in the Roman Campagna," pp. 170–79. It was a section of the skull of a young man neatly cut to fit the size of the hiding-place inside the altar. The late Professor Gauckler considered this fragment of skull as evidence of a human sacrifice, so frequent in the rites of Semitic creeds. The place of honour given to it in the Syrian lodge shows how holy it still was in the eyes of the Syrian colony in Rome.

It is ample time, however, that, leaving the *Memoria Apostolorum* of the Appian Way, we should turn our attention to the genuine graves of Peter on the Via Cornelia, and of Paul on the road to Ostia. The mention I have already made of their first coming to Rome brings back to my memory a gratifying recollection of my younger days. When the composer of "Mephistopheles," Arrigo Boito, was writing his "Nero" (which, alas,

[1] *Catil.*, 22. [2] *Vatin.*, 14.

seems condemned to oblivion[1]), it was my privilege, with him and Professor Pogliaghi, to explore the district of the Appian Way, in search of a suitable point of vantage where the two Apostles, according to all probabilities, had the first glimpse of Rome. Pilgrims approaching the Eternal City from the north by the Via Flaminia, or Clodia, or Triumphalis, could see it from the summit of Monte Mario (Mons Vaticanus), or from the *sepoltura di Nerone* (tomb of Vibius Marianus). Boito, Pogliaghi, and I had no mountain or hill on the south side near enough to answer our purpose; we had to be satisfied with the modest spur crowned by the mausoleum of Metella. And if the beauty and grace of Boito's musical strain harmonizes with the perfection of the panorama developed in the third act of the masterpiece, no better rhythm could ever be struck by a modern composer.

Coming back to Saint Peter, in order to avoid particulars known to all students, and to which I have myself so often made allusion in "Pagan and Christian Rome," I shall lay before the reader several facts concerning the buildings or monuments destroyed by Constantine to supply materials for his new structures; the buildings or monuments destroyed (mainly) by Paul III and Sixtus V for the convenience of the new *fabbrica di San Pietro;* and the art treasures and historical memoranda of the Constantinian and post-Constantinian basilica, dispersed in the course of the century which elapsed between the pontificate of Julius II (1503–16) and that of Paul V (1605–21).

The most important edifice destroyed by Constantine to make room for the basilica was the Circus of Agrip-

[1] Since represented at the Scala, Milan, April, 1924.

pina's gardens, once a favourite resort with young profligate Emperors like Caligula, Nero, and Heliogabalus.[1] If we consider that it had been the scene of the first sufferings of the Christians, as related by Tacitus in "Annals," xv, 45 (A.D. 65); and that, two years later, Peter himself had been crucified in the same place, at the foot of the obelisk (removed by Sixtus V to its present site), we must acknowledge that Constantine, while raising on the one side the memorial to Peter, was inevitably destroying on the other the documents and the evidence of his martyrdom in Rome.

Another edifice demolished by Constantine, or by one of his immediate successors, was the Phrygianum,[2] or meeting-lodge of the worshippers of Cybele, where the mysteries of the *Criobolium* and the *Taurobolium* were performed, in imitation of Christian baptism and confirmation. While the foundations for the façade of the basilica were being excavated to a depth of twenty-one feet, several altars inscribed with the records of the lodge were discovered. Some of these had been hammered and split into small fragments, while others, less damaged, were transferred to the Borghese Villa[3] outside the Porta Pinciana. Grimaldi specifies the site of this sanctuary: "At the left-hand corner of the façade looking toward the Camposanto, as well as in the adjoining garden of Cardinal Angelo Cesi." There were discovered, besides the altars, a beautiful Egyptian sphynx, a sarcophagus, and a mystic relief representing the myth of Oknos and the Donkey.

We must also remember that the Via Cornelia, on the north side of which Peter had been buried, was

[1] Compare the plan and description in *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 128.
[2] Consult de Rossi, *Inscr. Chr.*, vol. II, p. 204, n. 11.
[3] They are now in the Louvre.

lined with tombs, columbaria, and mausoleums of the classic age, which Constantine — on the strength of his authority as Pontifex Maximus — caused to be demolished. Antonio Bosio, who wrote about 1575, says: "Many tombs of the Gentiles, which had escaped destruction under Constantine, were laid bare in the foundations of the new church, together with an incredible number (*infinito numero*) of gravestones and sarcophagi. I remember one with a bacchic scene that was removed to the Vatican Palace by order of Gregory XIII."

There is no doubt that every cubic foot, every cubic inch, of the materials used in Constantine's basilica was removed from classic buildings. I have discovered in one of the notebooks of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger a memorandum of the quality, quantity, size, and colour of one hundred and thirty-six columns, representing nearly all the ancient quarries, not to speak of styles and ages. Of the architraves running from capital to capital — that is to say, spanning the intercolumniations — Grimaldi declares that no two consecutive ones were alike, and that some of them were inscribed with the names of Titus, Trajan, Gallienus, and others. On each side of the lower gateway were two granite columns, with composite capitals, representing the bust of the Emperor Hadrian framed in acanthus leaves.[1] An exception must be made in favour of the twelve spiral columns of the Confession, all alike, all carved by the same hand, of which there are eleven left.[2] Were we to believe Francesco Albertino, the porphyry columns, now in the chapel of the "Conception," were removed from the Baths of Domitian by San Martino ai Monti. Grimaldi says that many capitals of the columns supporting the nave had been carved out of blocks inscribed with

[1] See *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 133. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

historical records. He tried to save them from destruction, and caused some of the inscriptions to be sawn from the blocks; but while he was confined to bed with a touch of fever, the stonecutters took advantage of his absence to make use of the precious records for their own purposes. Grimaldi speaks also of the base of a column in the chapel of Saint Vincent, upon which was engraved the record of the career of a gallant Roman officer.

The roof of the nave was covered with tiles collected from various ruined edifices, or from ancient storerooms of the imperial brick-kilns. Many bore the date of A.D. 123 with the legend, "tile made in the imperial kilns of the Via Salaria, under the consulship of Pætinus and Apronianus," and a few the name of the founder of the basilica, "*Dominus Noster* CONSTANTINVS AVG*ustus*."

Other remembrances of the Constantinian age were found in demolishing the old church, or in excavating the foundations of the new one, such as coins embedded in the masonry, bearing the legend FEL*ix* TEMP*orum* REPARATIO, or else the names CONSTANTINVS ET HELENA. Some writers attribute to the original building the marble cross discovered in 1609 at the left-hand corner of the façade, at a depth of eighteen feet. I consider it an addition to the pediment made in the early Middle Ages.

This system of wholesale plundering, of promiscuous usage of pagan and Christian materials, of ruining many edifices for the embellishment of one, inaugurated by Constantine, was followed by his immediate successors, and even more mercilessly by the architects of the Renaissance, such as Fra Giocondo da Verona, the two

Sangalli, the two Peruzzi, Raphael, Michelangelo, to whom the care of rebuilding Saint Peter's was entrusted in succession, from the pontificate of Julius II to that of Paul V. These *architetti della reverenda fabbrica*, as they were officially styled, had no more compunction about burning into lime antique statues and portrait-busts and historical inscriptions than of levelling to the ground temples, baths, porticoes, triumphal arches, etc., provided such misdeeds made easier and cheaper their task. Valuable information can be gathered from the "Diary" of Giacomo Grimaldi [1] and from the documents collected and published by Professor Orbaan.[2] It is a lengthy and disastrous story, from which I quote a few instances.

There was an historical inscription of great value, a Bull of Gregory IV (827–44), formerly affixed to the wall of the nave. The masons of Julius II broke it in three pieces, the first of which perished, the second was made use of in the altar of Our Lady of the Fever, the third was inserted in the new pavement of the nave. Again, on September 12, 1606, the masons, being in need of a water-trough, laid their impious hands on the coffin of Urban VI, threw the bones of the Pope into the lime-pit, gave the piscatorial ring to Giacomo della Porta, and broke the sarcophagus a few weeks later. In the life of Pierino del Vaga (ed. Lemonnier, vol. x, pp. 1, 6, 8), Vasari relates that, while the masons were demolishing a wall, on the plaster of which Giotto had painted the Virgin and a host of saints, Pierino del Vaga and his friend Nicolò Acciajuoli, happening to pass by, put the

[1] Cod. Barberin, Vatic. XXXIV, 50. Consult Eugène Müntz: *Ricerche intorno ai lavori archeologici di Giacomo Grimaldi.* Florence, 1881.

[2] Orbaan, T. A. F.: *Documenti sul Barocco in Roma*, in Miscellanea A.S.R.S.P. 1920.

destroyers to flight, and saved, for the time being, the masterpiece.

It was at the instigation of the great artists of the *fabbrica*, named above, that sentence of death on the monuments of the Forum and of the Sacra Via was passed on July 22, 1540. By a brief of Paul III, Farnese, the privilege of excavating or of granting permission to excavate was taken away from the Apostolic Chamber, from church dignitaries, from the S.P.Q.R., and transferred exclusively to the representatives of the *fabbrica*. The Pope gave them ample authority to search for antiques, wherever they chose, within or outside the walls, and to pull to pieces the remains of ancient Rome. The penalty for opposers of such destructive and vandal measures was excommunication, the wrath of the Pope, and a fine of a thousand ducats. No pen can describe the ravages perpetrated by the *fabbrica* in the course of that fatal decade, 1540–49.

Had they not taken place, it is easy to imagine in what wonderful state of preservation the Comte de Tournon, leader of the Napoleonic excavations (1810–15) and ourselves (1871–1900) would have beheld the Forum and the Sacra Via! We should have found the stairs and the pediment of Faustina's temple perfect in all parts, with a wealth of pedestals, friezes, statues, and dedicatory inscriptions — the vestiges of the arch of Fabius, the conqueror of Savoy; the temple of Cæsar; the Rostra Julia; the marble enclosure of the Regia on which the Roman *Fasti consulares et triumphales* and the Roman calendar were engraved; the arch of Augustus with its monumental inscription; the Atrium Vestæ with the statues of the Vestales Maximæ still standing on their pedestals; the temple of Castor and Pollux, buried under a mountain of columns, bases, capitals and cornices,

enough to feed all the lime-kilns of the city; the Portico ad Minervam, with some imperial bronze edicts still affixed to their original place; the Augusteum, and the statue of Vortumnus in its original upright position at the entrance to the Vicus Tuscus.

Taking into consideration the penalties sanctioned for any opposer of the Papal Brief, we should imagine that no obstacle would have been put in the way of the *fabbricieri*. But the first to rebel against the *fabbricieri* and against his own Brief of July, 1540, was its author, Paul III, Farnese. The incident is well worth being known.

In the year 1546, while the Brief was in full force, and every bit of marble was being seized by the Vatican officials, Paul III, having been told that many works of art were found in the Baths of Caracalla, gave orders to his confidential manager, Messer Mario Maccarone, to transfer the invaluable plunder, not to Saint Peter's, but to the Farnese Palace. "The search made in the Antoniana," [1] Bartoli says, in "Memorie," 78, "at the time of Paul III, turned out so rich in statues, columns, architectural marbles, cameos, intaglios, bronzes, medals, lamps, that a museum [the Farnesiano] was formed with them. The enormous mass of heads, busts, and bas-reliefs, which fill two large rooms on the ground floor of the [Farnese] Palace, was also found in the Baths." Thus the group of Dirce tied to the horns of the Bull, the Herakles of Glycon, Atreus with the son of Thyestes, the Vestal Junia, a Pallas, a Flora, a Diana, a Venus, and four other figures of Herakles were saved from destruction and became the property of the Farnese. The most curious particular of these events is the behaviour of the

[1] The popular Renaissance name of Caracalla's Baths, derived from the classic *Thermæ Antoninianæ*.

Pope's confidential manager, Mario Maccarone, who did not hesitate to take a share of the plunder for his private benefit. On this delicate point we have the evidence of Ulisse Aldovrandi, who says: "In the courtyard of the Maccarone mansion, in the Via di Macel de' Corvi, I have seen a marble equestrian statue (the figure of the rider missing) — one of the best pieces found in the Baths of Caracalla — together with a portrait-statue of the same Emperor. Messer Mario has also taken possession of a marble pedestal, found near the temple of Faustina, of a mutilated replica of the Laocoön, and of a score of excellent busts."

In reading the accounts preserved in the Vatican and in the State archives, we get the impression that every building of ancient Rome was put to ransom, and that no corner of the city, however obscure, escaped the search of the emissaries of the *fabbrica*. Excavations were made at Sant' Adriano, for the pillaging of the Curia (Senate House); at San Tommaso in Parione, where two great columns of *giallo antico* were discovered; at the Villa Publica, and other such classic quarries. Blocks of Pentelic marble and fluted columns, nine feet in diameter, were removed from the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol; other blocks from the Forum and Theatre of Ostia; one colossal base from the Basilica of Constantine; two columns of cipollino from the Heroon of Romulus, son of Maxentius, and four from the temple of Venus and Rome. One of the happiest hunting-grounds of the *fabbricieri* was the cemetery of famous race-horses and of famous charioteers, which occupied a section of the Vatican district, between Hadrian's mausoleum and the Circus of Nero. The official memoranda testify to other acts of plunder, such as the removal of eighty-six carloads of travertine from one of the monuments of

the Forum; the removal of three blocks (architraves?) from the temple of Minerva in the Forum Transitorium, and of other blocks from the sacred grove of the Arvales, out of one of which was carved a bas-relief (set in the façade) representing Christ giving the keys to Peter.

Fresh campaigns of destruction were pursued toward the end of the sixteenth century. The behaviour of Gregory XIII, for instance, can be judged from the following anecdote. On May 15, 1578, a deputation from the Town Council brought to the notice of the Pope the collapse of a wing of the Imperial Palace, which had been undermined by the *fabbricieri*, and claimed that no further damage should be inflicted on the glorious remains of ancient Rome. We may imagine what answer was given to the City representatives from the fact that a subsequent decree of Gregory XIII extended the jurisdiction of the *fabbrica* to the ruins of Ostia, of Porto, and of the imperial villas of the Alban Hills. As regards the doings of Sixtus V, we find in them, as usual, the same contempt for the memories of the past, and the same prodigious activity and liberality in the substitution of new monuments.

Filippo Bonanni [1] justly remarks that in the brief space of five years he accomplished more than any of his long-lived predecessors; which fact makes us forgive his rough way of dealing with any obstacle that might have prevented or retarded the accomplishment of his plans. No account was kept of the objects discovered in the foundations of the new basilica, and poor Grimaldi was given hardly time to take hurried notes of what was taking place. The precious *Fasti consulares et triumphales* could be thrown into the lime-pits before the eyes of Michelangelo and Panvinio, without eliciting any protest from either of them.

[1] *Numismata Pontificia.* Rome, 1700.

Sixtus is also responsible for the melting of the bronze doors of the old basilica, for the destruction of the invaluable mosaics of the apse of Innocent III, and for the removal of the seven steps of porphyry which the pilgrims *ad limina* were wont to ascend on their knees.[1]

Concerning the supply of metal, Professor Orbaan has collected additional information from the account-books of Agostino Brasca, sub-treasurer of the *fabbrica*. The first consignment included the bronze ciborium of the Volto Santo (Veronica), that of Innocent VIII, that of Saint Andrew, and four hundred and twenty-seven roof tiles of gilt bronze thought to have been removed from the temple of Venus and Rome. Their weight amounted to forty-five thousand pounds, while that of the Pine-Cone alone was valued at ten thousand pounds. There were other tiles made of sheets of lead, and inscribed with the names of Alexander III, Innocent II, Celestinus III, Benedict XII, and of a FRATER ROMANVS, the last being the name of a plumber. The roof of the aisles was made of brick tiles bearing the names of King Theodoric, Alexander VI, Pius V, and Gregory XIII.

Other additions to the metal reserves were secured by the brass founder, Orazio Censori, whose accounts specify the following items: a bronze door (probably from the Lateran), a beam weighing 11,700 pounds (probably from the Pantheon), 2373 gilt tiles (from the above-named temple?), weighing altogether 160,240 pounds, besides 74,408 pounds of lead.

A considerable store of materials was obtained by Carlo Maderno, the architect of Paul V, from the demolition of the eastern arm of Michelangelo's Greek cross,

[1] There are three places in Rome in which this act of veneration is still performed: the famous Scala Santa at the Lateran, the steps of the Aracœli, and those of Santi Michele e Magno, in the Borgo.

when the Latin type was definitely adopted, and when the width of the nave was increased from twenty-seven to twenty-nine metres. Maderno also destroyed the partition wall which separated the new from the old church, doing irreparable damage to the graves of Callixtus III, Alexander VI, Urban VII, Innocent IX, and of Marcellus II, whose name and remembrance are so dear to the lovers of classic music.

The one hundred and thirty-six columns of the nave and aisles were cut and sawed into new shapes and used in the new church for steps, balustrades, paving, slabs, and the like. The big columns, however, which flank the side altars were quarried at Cottanello, a Sabine village since become famous for this peach-coloured vein of marble. The deed of concession of the quarries, granted by Paul V on March 31, 1620, says: "To Luke de Carolis from Cottanello, our private notary, faculty is given to thee, to excavate 'quodcumque genus lapidum marmoreorum,' especially in the district called Colle Secco." [1]

The "*pozzolana*," so essential for obtaining good cement, was quarried in the sand-pits of the Via Vitellia and the Via Aurelia, not far from the church of Saint Pancras. Other blocks of stone were obtained from the demolition of the old façade. The statues of the attic were carved out of travertine quarried along the banks of the Anio, at le Fosse, il Barco, and Lunghezzina, the river itself having been purposely deepened and straightened to allow a whole fleet of barges to carry their loads to the harbour of la Traspontina, near Saint Peter's. We even know the names of these humble crafts (*la Nettunese*, *la Genovese*, *la Bisciona*, *la Biscioncina*, *la Turca*) to which a place of distinction must be assigned in the history of the reconstruction of Saint Peter's.

[1] I have found this document in the *State Archives*, vol. 1620, p. 17.

The broken pottery and earthenware used in the rubble-work (*astraco*) of the vaulted ceiling was quarried in enormous quantities from the Monte Testaccio, thus lowering the height of that hill by several feet. Many marble sarcophagi, among which the elaborate one of Claudia Hermione Archimima,[1] were turned into water-troughs.

The sarcophagus inside which the Emperor Otho II had been laid to rest, on the left side of the atrium, was profaned on October 20, 1610, in the dead of the night, so as to avoid inconvenient witnesses. The skeleton was that of a short, thickset man, with a small head and strong teeth. When Grimaldi wrote his "Diary," the sarcophagus was used as a water-trough in the lower court of the Quirinal Palace, while its panels of verde antico, and its cover, cut out of a great block of red porphyry, were found *confracta iniuria temporum et ignorantia hominum.* This assertion, however, is not clear. Pietro Mallio says that the porphyry cover belonged to the sepulchre of Innocent II; others say that it had been removed from the mausoleum of Hadrian; others mention Crescentius the "Prefect" as the titular of the tomb. One thing, however, is certain. The huge monolith now used as a baptismal font at Saint Peter's [2] cannot have any connection with Hadrian's mausoleum, because that Emperor was cremated, not inhumated, and his ashes were enclosed in a cinerary urn, not in a coffin.

In the records of the *fabbrica* mention is made of numberless other sarcophagi discovered under the pavement of the old basilica. The one in which Pius III had

[1] *Corpus*, VI, 10106.

[2] The baptismal font was given its present shape by Giannantonio Tedeschi toward the beginning of the seventeenth century.

been buried was found, in 1606, thirty-five feet below the level of the choir. Another, the high-reliefs of which represented the episode of the Saviour giving the keys to Peter, came out of the same place. On July 5, 1607, a third, cut in Parian marble, with four lions' heads in bold relief, was dug out, with a mummified corpse of a dignitary named Constantius. A fourth contained the body of Pope Innocent VIII enveloped in Persian cloth. In a fifth, exhumed on November 8, 1606, was entombed Adrian IV, wearing slippers of Turkish make, and a piscatorial ring with a huge emerald in it. In the last place I shall mention a sixth sarcophagus, found on May 25, 1607, containing the mummy of an old woman, wound in bands woven of gold *ad instar puerorum nascentium.* The mummy was dumped into the common poliandrium.

While the basilica was thus being levelled to the ground, the destroyers scattered its relics to the four winds. Every church, every chapel, every villa-owner in central Italy, claimed and obtained a share of the plunder. Thus the so-called "Madonna orante," from the oratory of John VII, was given to the monastery of San Marco in Florence; a second fragment to the Chapter of Santa Maria in Cosmedin; and a third to an obscure monastery near the village of Orte. I have seen pieces of mosaics from the apse of Innocent III in the chapel of the Villa Catena, near the village of Poli, described in "Wanderings," Chapter IV, pp. 211–16. Two heads of saints by Giotto are kept in a private house at Assisi, a gift of Canon Piero Strozza, secretary to Paul V. Professor Muñoz [1] has discovered other precious relics in the almost unknown village of *Bauco*, near Frosinone, a gift

[1] Antonio Muñoz: *Reliquie artistiche della vecchia Basilica vaticana a Boville Ernica.* Rome, 1911.

of the same Pope to Bishop Giovanni Battista Simoncelli, who happened to be building at the time a chapel in honour of San Pietro Ispano. They are perhaps the best and richest spoils carried away by a single man from the

GIOTTO'S ANGEL REMOVED FROM THE VATICAN TO BOVILLE ERNICA

doomed Constantinian Basilica. They include the porphyry cross, once in the "Porticus Pontificum," before which many crowned heads and powerful knights had paid homage, on their way to coronation, or to a visit *ad limina;* also the image of an angel in mosaic, to which the following label is appended: "This image belonged to the

picture of the *Navicella*, which Cardinal James Stefaneschi, in the year 1298, had executed by Giotto." It was first exhibited in the Atrium of the Basilica, and later on was removed from its original place in 1617. Curiously enough, this angel, designed by the great artist, does not appear in any drawing of the Navicella, previous to its manumission, or in the facsimile now preserved in the church of the Capuchins near the Piazza Barberini. This angel, described by Torrigio,[1] has been patched and manipulated and altered many times. Its mate at Bauco, however, is perfectly well preserved, owing to its obscure location in a secluded mountain village; and great, therefore, is its importance in the history of Art as the only work of Giotto which has escaped ruin or transformation.

I may incidentally remark that very few masterpieces have gone through so many experiences as the Navicella. Placed originally by Cardinal Stefaneschi in the Atrium, it ran the risk of complete destruction in May, 1587, when Sixtus V advocated its removal; but *il cordoglio d'infiniti devoti* (the lamentations of numberless devotees) deterred him from carrying out his scheme. In 1610, however, Paul V, to make room for the new façade, demolished the portico, and cut the Navicella in three sections to make its removal easier. On August 24, 1617, after undergoing a thorough restoration, or rather renovation, by Marcello Provenzale (who designed the four figures floating in the air, and the fisherman), it was affixed to the wall of the Apostolic Palace overlooking the steps. In its new location, however, it was so exposed to atmospheric damages[2] that a committee, of which

[1] *Le sacre grotte*, p. 93.

[2] In the books of account for the year 1610 mention is made of 1550 pounds of "enamels (enamelled tesseræ) cavati dalla Navicella."

THE APOSTLES PAUL AND PETER BY ANDREA DI BREGNO
Now in the Church of Saint Peter at Boville Ernica

Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Carlo Maderno, and Giovanni Calandra were members, was summoned for advice. Acting upon their verdict, Pope Urban VIII removed it inside the Basilica above the main door on June 12, 1630. Pope Innocent X, in the year 1649, seeing that the Navicella had been placed too high above the floor of the church, and in an impossible light, between two windows, caused it to be removed to the small courtyard opposite the gate of the palace, where it was reconstructed by Guidobaldo Abbatini. Its last migration is described by the diarist, Giacinto Gigli, as follows: "Pope Alexander VII, while engaged in building the colonnade of Saint Peter's, removed its last fragments to its present location above the entrance door, with the help of Lorenzo Bernini for the architectural part, and of Orazio Manetti for the pictorial. Manetti's work cannot be called a restoration, but a complete renovation, Giotto's original being lost forever."

Other relics of this group, namely, the statues of the Apostles, once flanking the Navicella, were given to the Hermitage of the Camaldules at Tusculum. The piscatorial ring of Boniface VIII, discovered October 20, 1605, and given to the treasurer of the *fabbrica*, soon disappeared from the Vatican chest of jewels. A Byzantine medal of Saint Nicholas, discovered near the Phrygianum, was offered to Cardinal Marcello Filonardi. On September 23, 1610, four columns of porphyry were given to Matteo da Castello to be used for the Apostolic Palace. On October 29th of the same year seventeen fluted columns were given to Alfonso Pandolfini for the same purpose, together with a huge block, out of which the coat-of-arms of Paul V was to be carved. Even the building materials and cement, the product of the demolition of the old structure, were given away. We are

told, for instance, by Severoli[1] that the blocks of travertine which had been used by Bernini in his attempt to furnish Saint Peter's with a baroque campanile, were conceded to the City for the building of the Capitoline Museum, also to the Chapter of Santa Maria in Via Lata, to the church of Sant' Agnese, etc.

Other relics of the Basilica are to be seen at Bauco, among which are the two exquisite statuettes of the Apostles reproduced in the illustrations. (See p. 111.)

There lived in Rome in the last decade of the fifteenth century a wealthy French prelate, Guillaume de Perrier by name, whose ambition seems to have been the erection of numberless altars, all modelled on the same pattern and all chiselled by Andrea di Bregno, an exquisite Milanese artist, whose works in Rome have been illustrated by Steinmann, in *Jahrbuch der K. Preuss Kunstsammlungen*, 1899, III. There is one altar in Saint Peter's dated 1490; three in Saint John Lateran (1492–93); one in Saint Paul's (1494); one in Santa Maria del Popolo (1497), and one in the church of Santi Apostoli, the date of which is uncertain. Grimaldi, the chronicler of the destruction of Saint Peter's, writes in his "Diary": "To-day, January 25, 1606, in the presence of a committee of canons, an altar was pulled to pieces. It contained a silver vase with holy relics tied in a cloth, and two statuettes of the Princes of the Apostles, and the inscription:

GVILLERMVS DE PERRERIIS AVDITOR
(ROTAE) HOC ALTARE DEO ET SANCTIS
APOSTOLIS DEDICAVIT ANNO MCCCCLXXXXI.

The habit of distributing the spoils of the old church

[1] *Atti Accad.* Corton, I, p. 110.

THE BRONZE PINE-CONE FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF POPE SYMMACHUS

among the favourites of the Curia lasted all through the process of demolition.

A medal found on November 20, 1607, in the foundations of the belfry with the image of Saint Nicholas, and another with the name of Leo, "Vasileus Romeon," were given to Francesco Torrigio.

On August 4, 1626, the statue of an Epicurean from Tivoli, Flavius Agricola by name, accompanied by a most profane inscription, was discovered in the foundations of the Baldacchino. The inscription was destroyed or thrown into the Tiber, and the statue of the Epicurean was given to Cardinal Francesco Barberini.

The eight porphyry columns of the fountain of Pope Symmachus (498–514), in the Atrium, were removed from their place, and the fountain itself destroyed on September 26, 1608.[1]

The inscriptions found under the chapel of Santi Processus and Martinianus, among which was the historical one of Ambrose, "primicerius notariorum," were used again upside down in the new pavement.

On January 30, 1610, the bodies of the two Borgias, Callixtus III and Alexander VI, were exhumed from the temporary grave to which they had been transferred by Sixtus V *in obelisci translatione*. Cardinal Çapata and the Marquis of Billiena, both devout Spaniards, took mercy on the shattered remains of their countrymen, and had them removed in the dead of night to the Spanish church of Monserrato, with the help of Bishop Vives of Valencia. Ill luck, however, seemed to cling to them. Owing to certain disputes with the attendant

[1] This fountain and its characteristic pine-cone are mentioned in an inscription discovered on August 20, 1618, in the foundations of the belfry. It is a childish and absurd account of a dream in which a boy thought he saw other youths *ludentes ad pinnam qui est in atrio*. A rough sketch of the fountain is to be found in *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 136.

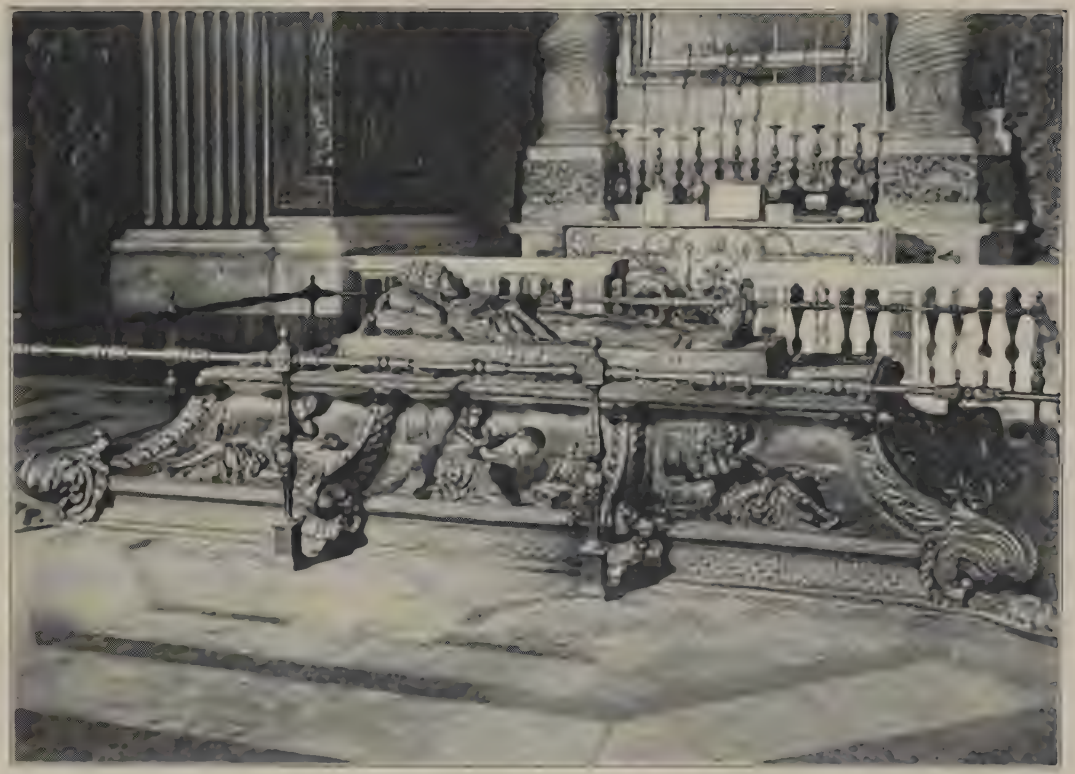
clergy, the rattling bones were thrown into a wooden box, and placed in a dark corner of the sacristy, where they were allowed to remain until 1889. They are now preserved in the chapel of Saint Diego.

On June 30, 1606, the body of Pope Leo the Great was discovered inside a wooden coffin, made secure by means of iron bindings. The coffin was entrusted to the care of the Chapter, but it has never since been heard of.

A small cinerary urn was taken by Cardinal Pallotta and given to a friend named Pompeo Ferrucci.

A valuable Byzantine medal found by Paolo Baciocchi was given to Cardinal Marcello Filonardi; a cinerary urn to Cardinal del Monte; a coffin with the remains of a holy man dressed in golden cloth, with a gold cross on the breast, to Cardinal Evangelista Pallotta; two porphyry columns to Cardinal di Cosenza; two colossal beams from the roof of the nave to the Ambassador from Venice; marbles and bas-reliefs of every description to Albertus Magnus; other porphyry columns to Alfonso Pandolfini. There is no doubt that some relics were removed to the crypts — the Sacre Grotte Vaticane [1] — but at haphazard and without any definite plan, as we can judge from the fate of the mausoleum of Callixtus III, the exquisite figures of which, representing John the Evangelist, Saint Bartholomew, James the Less, and the Saviour, lie scattered all over the place. What a unique and marvellous museum could have been formed with the spoils of the old church, with the hundreds and hundreds of graves of Popes and kings and illustrious personages, with the thousands of inscriptions, with the set of "piscatorial rings," of instruments of torture (such as the *ungula*, the *scorpion*, and the *equulio*), with the mas-

[1] Compare Torrigio Francesco: *Le sacre grotte.* Roma, Mascardi, 1639.



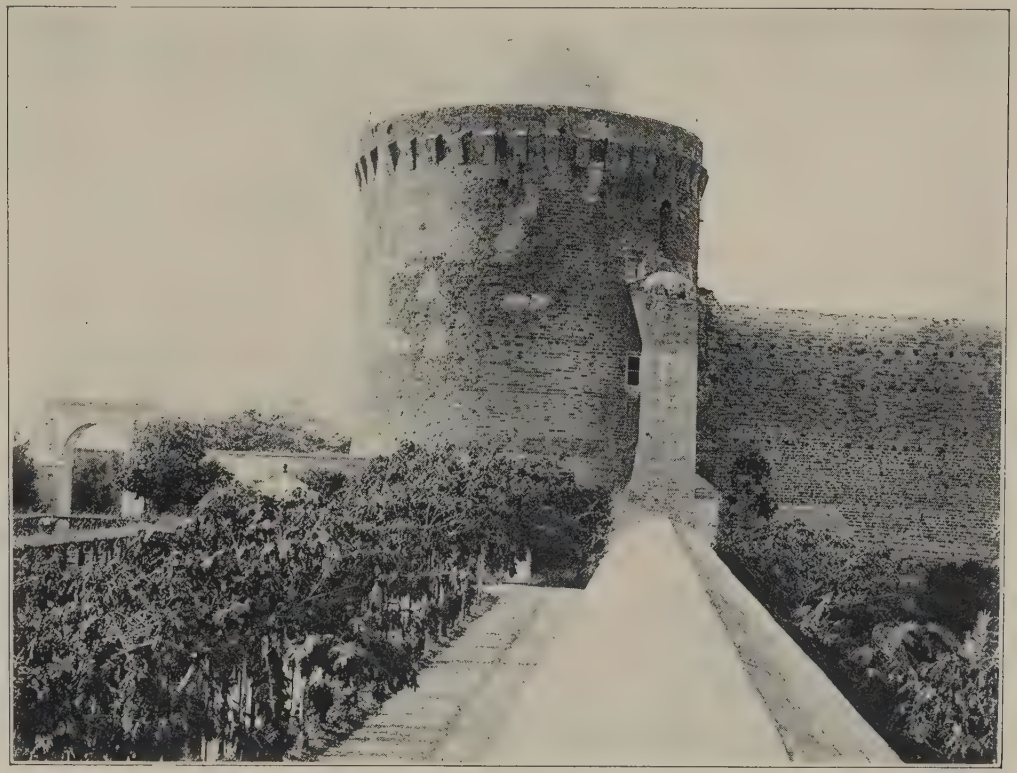
THE TOMB OF SIXTUS IV

terpieces of the Renaissance, with the coins and medals, and Bulls, and stained glass, and mosaics, and stuffs woven in Persia and Syria, and precious stones, etc. It seems that an attempt was made to form an epigraphic collection (not unlike the present "Corridoio delle Iscrizioni") if I understand rightly certain records of the *fabbrica*, in which mention is made of "*spranghette per li epitaffi messi nelle stanze della Congregatione*" (clasp of metal for fixing epitaphs in the room where the Deputies meet).

Pope Benedict XV, who, without being an archæologist or a man of science, had the intuition and felt the responsibility of his exalted position, founded quite recently a "Museo della Fabbrica" on the south wing of Bernini's colonnade from the designs of the architect G. B. Giovenale. The beginnings, however, of this useful and welcome institution were not quite satisfactory, and have given rise to a certain amount of criticism on account of the removal of the famous tomb cast in bronze by Antonio del Pollaioulo, an exquisite specimen of sepulchral sculpture, under cover of which Sixtus IV had been laid to rest in the Cappella del Sacramento. Julius II, of the same (della Rovere) family, was also buried under the monument so intimately connected with the history of the Basilica, so that we feel that its transfer to the new museum is a most debatable measure.

The Basilica of Saint Peter must not be considered as standing alone in the Vatican district. It was rather the capital of a kingdom *sui generis*, surrounded by a large number of churches, chapels, monasteries, hospices, palaces, baths, libraries, residences of foreign monks, etc., which constituted a suburb called Burg (Burgh,

Borgo), unprotected by walls and exposed to hostile invasion. Such was also the case with Saint Paul's outside the Walls, of Saint Lawrence on the Via Tiburtina, and of Sant' Agnese on the Via Nomentana. Such isolation in an open stretch of country was the cause of their falling so easily a prey to the Saracens in the year 846. The feeble garrison of Ostia was easily overcome by the Infidels, who, frustrated in their attempt to storm the city itself, avenged themselves by wrecking the three suburban basilicas which I have just mentioned, and by carrying away the inestimable treasures which had been accumulated in the course of centuries over the tombs of the Apostles. The sight of the burning ruins caused the death of Pope Serge II, and the panic-stricken citizens elected Leo IV as his successor. No time was lost in relieving the fortunes of Rome. The Saracens were defeated at the mouth of the Tiber in a battle which has been immortalized by Raphael in the "Stanza dell' Incendio di Borgo." To prevent a repetition of the same occurrence Leo determined to surround Saint Peter's and the Borgo with a fortified enclosure, the remains of which are still to be seen in the gardens of the Vatican and in the so-called "Corridoio del Castello." A second detached fort was built about the same time for the protection of the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. Lastly, John VIII, in 880, did for Saint Paul's what Leo had done for Saint Peter's, with this difference, that while Johannipolis and Laurentiopolis remained detached forts, one or two miles distant from the City gates, the Vatican Burg was joined to the City and became its fourteenth ward, mostly inhabited by Teutons, Saxons, Longobards, Franks, Goths, and Frisians, ex-worshippers of Wotan and Thor. Each of these nations built national hospices, churches, chapels, baths, meeting-halls, and hospitals,



THE WALLS OF LEO IV

the whole group being termed "*scola.*" [1] Thus the barbarians from the north became peaceful visitors to the graves of the Apostles and exchanged the weapons of war for the pilgrim's staff.

The memory of this transformation is still kept vivid in the Burg by churches which may have lost their original shape, but not their denomination and their historical value. First, as to the *Schola Anglorum.*

The deep veneration felt by the Anglo-Saxons for Saint Peter made them undertake in large numbers the journey to Rome. In the second half of the seventh century, King Ceadwalla was christened at the spring of Damasus and, having died in his baptismal robes, was buried in the Basilica in the year 689. King Ina, a visitor to the tomb of the Apostle in 725, declined to go back to his native land, and was also buried in the Vatican. The pilgrimage was in later times undertaken by Offa I, Siger, Offa II, Coenred, and many other kings of the eighth and ninth centuries, who found shelter in their national hospice, the richest and best of such international institutions in Rome, as shown by the popular denomination of "Burgus Anglorum" and "Vicus Saxonum" given occasionally to the Leonine City. For its maintenance a tax was imposed at home of one silver penny for each family owning a piece of land. This is the origin of "Peter's pence," which constituted one of the most important revenues of the Holy See. It is a curious fact that, while the money collected for that purpose was almost exclusively British, we find no British pennies in our excavations, except in the shape of a hidden treasure. Muratori [2] had already remarked the

[1] Or *schola.* Compare Ehrle: *Ricerche su alcune antiche chiese del Borgo di S. Pietro.* Rome, 1907. De Waal Anton: *I luoghi Pii sul territorio Vaticano.* Rome, 1886.

[2] *Antiq. Med. Aeu.*, II, 751. Ed. Milan, 1739.

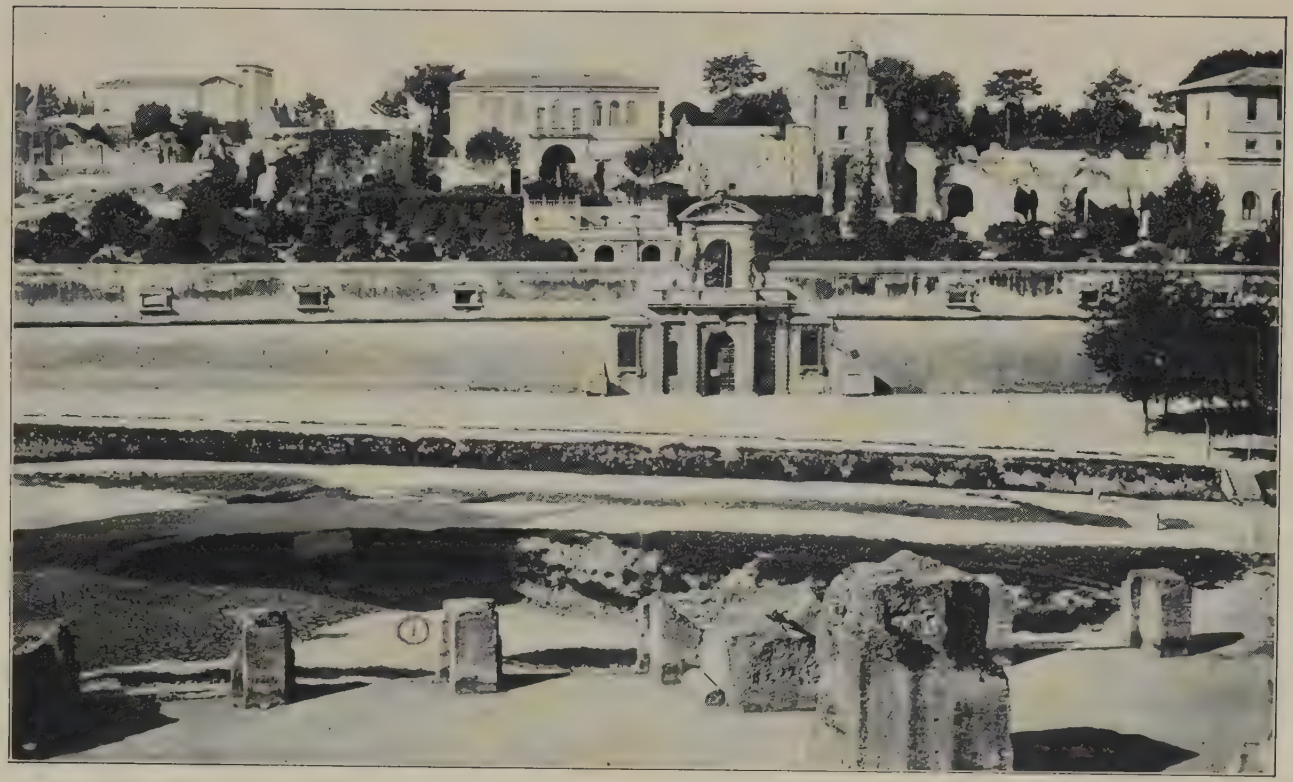
curious fact of the extraordinary scarcity of such pennies in Roman or Italian numismatic collections, and even to-day but a few specimens are to be found in the great Vatican collection. It is evident, therefore, that British Peter's pence must have been melted in the pontifical mint for the sake of the silver.

The memory of these interesting events is still kept alive in Rome by the Church and hospital of Santo Spirito *in Saxia.*

Next in importance to the British was the *Schola* of the Langobards, founded by Queen Ansa and Pope Stephen IV about A.D. 770. Its representatives, the church and hospice of Saint Justin, were demolished about the time of Alexander VII to make room for Bernini's colonnade.

The *Schola Francorum,* instituted by Charlemagne about A.D. 797, is represented in its turn by the church of Saint Saviour *de Ossibus* adjoining the Porta Cavalleggeri; and the *Schola Frisonum* by the church of San Michele in Borgo.

The name of the Prince of the Apostles is connected in mediæval traditions with the fate of Simon the magician, so vividly represented in Francesco Vanni's picture in the Vatican. His downfall is alleged to have taken place in the middle slope of the Sacred Way, between the temple of Romulus, son of Maxentius, and the temple of Venus and Rome. The exact spot was once marked by a small shrine of Saint Peter, nestling among the classic ruins, and by a paving-stone with two cavities, which were believed to have been made by the knees of the Apostle while imploring God to punish the impostor. After the earthquake of 1349, which caused the collapse of Constantine's Basilica, the paving-stone



THE CLIVUS SACER AND THE PALATINE

The figure 1 shows the exact spot where, according to tradition, Simon the Aviator fell in the presence of Nero and Saint Peter

was removed to the neighboring church of Santa Maria Nova, where I believe it is still kept among the pious curiosities of the place.

It is a curious coincidence that Justinus, Irenæus, and the author of the "Philosophunema" do not mention such an incident in the life of Peter, although they speak at length of the magician as the first Heresiarch. On the other hand, we have the evidence of Suetonius, Dion, and Juvenal about an aviator who performed some kind of experiments before the Emperor Nero, in imitation of the flight of Icarus. It is evident, therefore, that the tradition connecting Simon Peter with Simon the impostor is a late one and rests on no historical proof.[1] Before the stone was removed from the original place, it gave rise to a curious superstition. People believed that rain-water, which had collected in the two cavities made in the paving-stone by the knees of Peter, was a miracle-working remedy, so that crowds of ailing wretches gathered round the place at the approach of a shower.

I have been in a certain sense connected with this question, owing to the discovery which I witnessed in 1881, near the Villa Colonna on the Quirinal, of a pedestal and a statue of the old Sabine god Semo Sancus Sanctus Dius Fidius. The pedestal is a replica of the one seen by Justinus, the Apologist and Martyr, on the island of the Tiber. He must have given it only a cursory glance mistaking the name of the Sabine god for that of the unfortunate aviator.

[1] Consult on these subjects Enrico Fabiani's memoir, *Notizie di Simon Mago.* Rome, 1860.

CHAPTER III

THE BASILICA OSTIENSIS

THE question whether the body of Saint Paul, a Roman citizen, was cremated or inhumated may appear to be of little consequence to the general reader, but it is not so. On one side we have the fact of the Semitic origin of the Apostle, which brings as a consequence the rite of inhumation; on the other, we have the tradition that he was buried in a place under the present canopy of Arnolfo di Cambio, a tradition so constant and undeniable that it almost reaches the value of historical evidence. How is it possible, then, to suppose that a Roman citizen of the Golden Age should have been laid to rest in an Eastern fashion, in an open field exclusively occupied by pagan columbaria and cinerary urns; in a field worse than a bog, which for the fifth part of the year was made inaccessible by the overflowing waters of the Tiber? It is true that the columbaria discovered in 1897 in the Vigna Villani, and those discovered in 1917–18 within a stone's throw of the Basilica, contained ashes as well as corpses, cinerary urns as well as coffins; but corpses and coffins belong to a much later period, at least one and a half centuries later than the death of the Apostle. And we know, besides, that Paul's grave was visited by thousands and thousands of faithful, from the day of his execution in the year A.D. 67 to A.D. 846, when it was destroyed by the Saracens. How, then, and where were his remains laid to rest? In a columbarium of reticulated masonry, like all those to which I have just made allusion? Or within a *memoria* built for him alone? Or in a coffin above the level of the miry field? None

THE ROAD TO SAINT PAUL'S OVERFLOWED BY THE TIBER

of these conjectures seems satisfactory. The Constantinian Basilica was erected above the grave which lies only 3.76 metres *above* the average level of the Tiber and four metres *below* that of the inundation of 1870. These figures would indicate that the grave must have been overflowed not less, perhaps, than twenty times a year. The reader must also keep in mind that the tomb stood, not on the road to Ostia, but on a side lane of no importance whatever, the pavement of which has been found in my time over and over again. I must acknowledge that my venerated master, Giovanni Battista de Rossi, has not treated this subject of Saint Paul with his usual skill and acumen; in fact, he was mistaken about it from beginning to end. In the first volume of the "Roma Sotterranea," pages 185, 186, he says: "It is certain that Paul was laid to rest at the second milestone of the road to Ostia (*sic*), where we can see with our own eyes (*sic*) the cliffs of the near hill artificially cut for the erection of the basilica enclosing the grave." Now, excavations made for the construction of the great sewer of the left bank of the Tiber, to a depth of twenty-two metres under the level of the church (two metres above the level of the sea) have proved that the rocky spur of the hill has never been cut and that the Via Ostiensis has never changed direction.

I am the fortunate owner of two pocket- or sketch-books of the late architect Count Virginio Vespignani who was, first, assistant, later director, of the works of reconstruction of the Basilica after the fire of July 16, 1823.

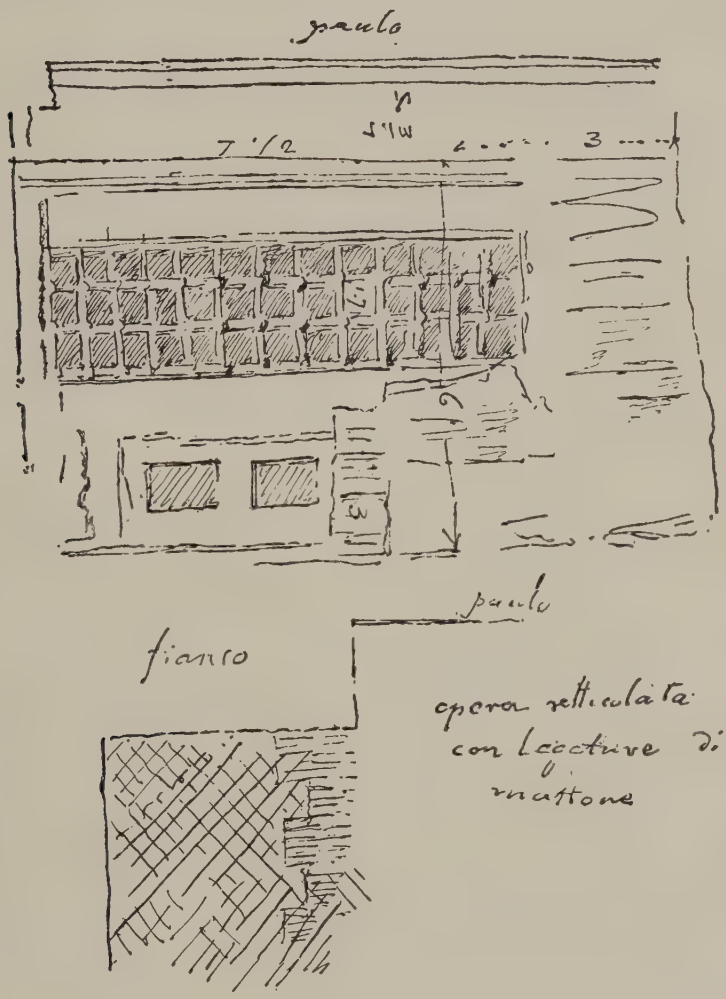
Vespignani was a man of genius and an acute observer, but he lacked archæological knowledge. The first of his sketch-books bears the label: "1838, Confessione di San Paolo"; the label of the other says, "Scavo della seconda

confessione del 1850." The first refers to the Confession excavated and built in 1838 at the foot of the high altar, on the side facing the nave; the other, to the building of the new canopy with the celebrated columns of alabaster offered to Gregory XVI by the Egyptian Khedive, Mehemet Ali,[1] and to the bases of malachite offered by the Czar Nicholas of Russia. One sheet of the first sketch-book, numbered 15, and reproduced in the accompanying illustration, is very valuable, because it proves that the Apostle was buried within, or near, a columbarium of reticulated work, with angles strengthened by bricks, in the style of masonry characteristic of the age of Hadrian (*opera retticulata con legature di mattone*). It is to be regretted that neither Vespignani nor his colleagues of the Pope's Committee of Fine Arts, nor one of the contemporary archæologists or epigraphists, showed the slightest interest in a discovery of such magnitude. They let escape and fail the only opportunity which made possible the solution of the problem. I have heard from the abbot of the adjoining Benedictine monastery that, on the occasion mentioned above, one or more funeral inscriptions were discovered among the rubbish; they contained probably the name of the family or of the patrician who had offered a harbour of rest to the decapitated body of the great preacher. We shall see in Chapter V that the same unpardonable negligence was shown in the parallel case of the grave of Agnes on the Via Nomentana.

Perhaps the best work of Christian art found in 1854 near Saint Paul's Confession, called by Grisar "superb,"

[1] This *baldacchino* has just been demolished (whether wisely or not I shall not argue), to place in a better light that of Arnolfo di Cambio, which had been enclosed, as it were in a golden cage. The alabaster columns have been set up again, not ungracefully, at the foot of the nave, on each side of the main door.

"a masterpiece," and "a synopsis of Christian doctrines, is the sarcophagus now in the Lateran Museum, illustrated by Marchi, Garrucci, Kraus, de Rossi, and



Ficker. The subjects represented in its reliefs begin with the creation of man, the fall of Adam and Eve, and the promise of a redemption. Its fulfilment is expressed in the next scene representing the "magi" or wise men,

adoring the divine infant. Then follow representations of the miracles of our Lord, as detailed in the Gospels, and of the principal acts of Saint Peter. Another not less beautiful and not less valuable sarcophagus, representing the principal events in the Passion of our Lord, now in the same Lateran Museum and reproduced in the accompanying illustration, was found, I believe, near the Apostle's grave.

As the Lateran seems to have been the constant prey of fires, so the Basilica of Paul seems to have been continuously shaken and occasionally destroyed by earthquakes. The "Liber Pontificalis," in the life of Leo I, describes how that Pope was obliged to rebuild the church almost from the foundations, *post ignem divinum.* This peculiar phrase, "*post ignem divinum,*" has given rise to much speculation, having been interpreted by some as an allusion to a thunderbolt, by others as a reference to an earthquake, followed by a conflagration. Now we know that in the year 443, under the pontificate of the same Pope, Rome was terrorized by such a vibration of the earth that many temples and public edifices fell to the ground. The task of repairing the damages at Saint Paul's was entrusted by Pope Leo to Felix the priest and to Adeodatus the deacon, and the memory of the event has survived to the present day in the epitaph of these two worthy dignitaries, a charming poem in six distichs, which begins with the words "*Exultate Pii . . .*" It is now preserved in the museum of the abbey.

The earthquake of 443 is by no means the last in the annals of the disasters of Saint Paul's. On April 30th of the year 801 another tremor of the earth shook the holy edifice and changed it into a heap of ruins. Charlemagne, who was at that time residing at Spoleto, is known to have been terrified by the violence of the shock. A third

SCENES FROM THE PASSION OF OUR LORD ON A SARCOPHAGUS
Now in the Lateran Museum

disaster is chronicled as having taken place on the 9th of September, 1348. This is better known by the name of *terremoto del Petrarca*, because the poet happened to be in Rome at the time. The account which he gives, in the seventh letter of the second book, is thrilling in the extreme, because many vestiges of the upheaval of the earth within the city limits are still discernible. I have published lately a memoir on this subject in the "Bollettino Archeologico Comunale" of 1920, under the title "Segni di terremoto negli edificii di Roma Antica," to which paper I refer the reader for more substantial information.

In the library of Saint Gallen a diary was found, not long ago, the work of a melancholy, disheartened monk who had been frightened to death by the abovementioned earthquake of Charlemagne. He seems to have extracted from the "Chronicle" of Orosius all the paragraphs concerning eclipses, famines, apparitions, plagues, mysterious noises from the depths of the earth, and other such morbid and frightful phenomena. Three paragraphs pertain more closely to the fate of Roman churches and monuments. He records: "A.D. 408, Bassus and Philip being consuls, terrific noises were heard in the Forum of Peace for several consecutive days"; "A.D. 429, on Sunday, September 1st, Florentius and Dionysius being consuls, Rome was shaken from its innermost depths." And again, "A.D. 443, Maximus and Paterius being consuls, the vibrations of the earth made many statues fall from their pedestals, and caused the collapse of the *New Porticoes*." This sentence is interesting for a double reason — first, because it proves that toward the middle of the fifth century many statues were still standing in the Forums of the City. In fact, we know from other sources that there were still standing

two *colossi* (probably those of Augustus and Nero), twenty-two equestrian statues, seventy-seven statues of the gods made of ivory, and three hundred and seventy-five of bronze; secondly, because the site of the above-named Porticoes (*Portica nova*) has been found in the region now crossed by the Via dei Chiavari, the Via Arenula, and the Campo de' Fiori.[1] I have kept this special quarter of the City under constant supervision since 1872, in the hope of ascertaining what effect a seismic wave, like that of 443, could produce on a great public edifice. I have explored many cellars and taken notice of many excavations which happened to be made within its boundary. I have found twenty-two broken columns under the hospice of Tata Giovanni, eight of granite under the Santa Croce Palace, four of porphyry and carystian marble in the Piazza dei Catinari, and so on; but the evidence of a seismic commotion was far from being conclusive. There was a certain amount of parallelism in the direction in which the columns had fallen, as if the main shock had come from southwest to northeast, but there were exceptions to the rule. The same lack of evidence has been found at Ostia and Porto and in the great imperial villas of Latium, such as Domitian's at Castel Gandolfo, Hadrian's at Tivoli, the Quintilian on the Appian Way, etc.

Like the Vatican Basilica, that of Saint Paul was surrounded by monastic buildings of every description, including cloisters, hospices, hospitals, baths, hostelries, porticoes, water-tanks, stables, granaries, wine-cellars, shrines, cemeteries, gardens, orchards, warehouses,

[1] These porticoes, connected with the theatre of Pompey, were divided in two wings: one called Porticus *Jovia*, from Diocletian *Jovius*, the other Porticus *Herculia*, from Maximilian *Herculius*, their respective builders.

SAINT PAUL'S IN 1625
From a rare etching by Israel Sylvestre

churches, oratories, and so forth. The present abbey is the result of the junction of two much older ones, which are described in the "Liber Pontificalis," one as "Monasterium Sancti *Cæsarii* ad quattuor angulos," the other as "Monasterium Sancti Christi martyris *Stephani* quod in atrio beati Apostoli Pauli fundatum est." The erection of a third monastery was planned by Charlemagne, who mentions it more than once in his correspondence with Adrian I and Leo III; but none of the three was destined to have a bright, useful, and peaceful existence; first, on account of their location outside the shelter of the Aurelian walls, and of their consequent exposure to foreign invasions and pillages; secondly, on account of the virulence of malaria which killed the poor monks as soon as they had dared to challenge it. The oldest mention of this evil occurs in the life of Hadrian I: "He repaired the monasteries by Saint Paul's which had been abandoned by their inmates." I think that the absolute redemption of this district, which the present generation has accomplished, constitutes one of the best achievements of modern sanitary engineering.

I shall not mention the Saracenic inroad of 846, having already treated the subject in "Pagan and Christian Rome," page 153, and in "Destruction of Ancient Rome," page 127, nor the profanation of the Apostle's grave which the infidels accomplished, as certified by the "Liber Pontificalis" in the life of Benedict III (*sepulchrum Pauli Apostoli quod a Saracenis destructum fuerat, perornavit*). As a consequence of these events the Pauline group of buildings was transformed into an outlying fort named Johannipolis, from its founder John VIII, and surrounded by an elaborate system of battlemented walls and towers. No trace is left above ground of John's stronghold, but we can reconstruct its aspect

from its later imitations in Castel Borghetto, Castel Savello, Castel Caetani, and other mediæval fortified farms of the Campagna. Johannipolis, extending on both sides of the road to Ostia, and with a small harbour on the Tiber, must have been of unusual strength, judging from the gallant stand which Stefano Conti made there against Pope Paschal II in 1099. A document of the time of Hildebrand (Gregory VII, A.D. 1074) speaks of the castle as being still in efficient condition, but the anonymous Magliabecchianus, who wrote between 1410 and 1415, mentions it as a recollection of past centuries: "Johannipolis quæ in hodiernis *non videtur*."

More extraordinary still is the disappearance of the portico which joined the church of Saint Euplus, by the city gate, to the Basilica, built for the comfort of pilgrims in rainy and hot weather. The colonnade was forty-five thousand feet long. Each shaft was different from the others in length, diameter, and quality, and no base or capital was of the same shape or dimension. If we suppose that the intercolumniations measured six feet, there was room for seven hundred and seventy columns. Not one, nay, not a fragment of one, now survives, an instance of wholesale destruction which is without parallel in the history of the destruction of Rome.

At any rate, further investigation of this interesting district has lately been made impossible on account of its level having been raised many feet to preclude any further inundation of the Tiber. At the same time the newly raised ground is being occupied by the so-called "Industrial Quarter," comprising a large number of mills, factories, foundries, electrical and chemical works, while the old road leading to the Basilica, once lined with ancient trees, has been transformed into an avenue one hundred and twenty feet wide, running side by side

THE CLOISTERS AT SAINT PAUL'S

with the railway to Ostia, with the waterway of the Tiber, with two or three tramway lines, and with other manifestations of modern unrest, which render impossible concentration of thought and the silent enjoyment of the memories of the past.

Judging from the number and importance of the hospitals and *valetudinaria* which lined this portico, malarial fever must have raged among the pilgrims threading their way to Saint Paul's. The one annexed to the church of Saint Euplus "by the gate" ranks among the largest in Rome, with its staff of nineteen assistants and a corresponding number of chaplains. This venerable institution, adjoining the pyramid of Caius Cestius, disappeared in 1849 during the siege and bombardment of Rome by General Oudinot. It regained a certain notoriety in 1886, in consequence of the discovery, among its ruins, of a sarcophagus showing the figure of Christ between those of Peter and Paul. It was purchased and removed to England by a Mr. Wilshere.

Another pesthouse, midway between the gate and Saint Paul's, was connected with the "Chapel of the Separation," which owes its origin to a legend borrowed from the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, according to which Peter and Paul parted company at this precise spot on their way to execution. Pius IV, in 1562, entrusted it to the care of the Confraternity of the Holy Trinity. It was rebuilt in 1568, as stated in the dedicatory inscription: "*Capella hospitalis SS. Trinitatis Convalescentium et Peregrinorum fundata anno MDLXVIII.*" The legend of the separation is summarized as follows: "In this spot Saint Peter and Saint Paul parted on their way to martyrdom: and Paul said to Peter: 'The light be with you, O founder of the church, O shepherd of the lambs of Christ,' and Peter said to

Paul, 'Peace be with you, preacher and guide of the just.'" This charming shrine has lost its fascination, suffocated as it has become by the monstrous erections of modern industry. The same fate has been shared by the church and hospital of Saint Menna, an Egyptian martyr of great repute, whose popularity in Rome and elsewhere is certified by the number of *ampullæ* or goblets, inscribed with his name, which are found in the belt of suburban cemeteries of the fourth and fifth centuries, and which were used to carry away oil from the lamps burning at his Alexandrine shrine.

On reaching the goal of their pilgrimage, the devotees did not lack the means of strengthening and purifying their weary bodies. The "Liber Pontificalis" mentions more than once refectories, bathhouses, and even lavatories. "Symmachus (498–514) fecit in usum necessitatis humanæ." An inscription, published by de Rossi,[1] mentions an Eusebius, builder of another bathhouse, and, as there was no spring water available at Johannipolis, he had resorted to the use of an hydraulic wheel: "*rotas* fecit: in balineo per *mangana* fecit," the water being lifted from the Tiber.

In the matter of patchwork, Saint Paul's could well stand comparison with Saint Peter's. The blame rests more on Valentinian II, Theodosius, Arcadius, Honorius, and Galla Placidia, who rebuilt, doubled the extent, and changed the orientation (from east to west) of the Basilica, than with Constantine. It is enough to consider that a large section of the pavement of the nave and aisles was stratified with marble gravestones in a more or less fragmentary condition, gathered at random from

[1] *Inscript. Christ.*, vol. III, p. 464.

the cemeteries of Ostia, of Porto, and of Rome, but especially from the catacombs of the Via Ostiensis and the Via Laurentina.[1] This promiscuous origin deprives the "Sylloge Inscriptionum" of Saint Paul's of any topographic value; but it throws light on the extraordinary behaviour of the Emperors of the fourth and fifth centuries, who issued constitution after constitution against the despoilers of ancient cemeteries, while personally robbing them of the most valuable historical records.

Of the eighty columns supporting the nave and aisles, twenty-four, beautifully matched in size, colour, and finish, had been removed by Constantine or Valentinian from a single classic edifice; the other fifty-six were collected from various buildings, mostly temples of the false gods.[2] The two supporting the arch of Placidia count among the largest in existence. Giovanni Dondi dell' Orologio in his itinerary, compiled in 1375, says: "In the church of Saint Paul there are four lines of columns, as in Saint Peter's, but larger and more perfect. They number ninety, of which two at the sides of the high altar are equal in size to those of the Pantheon." Not many years ago, Emiliano Sarti, an archæologist to whom Dondi's surmise was utterly unknown, wrote in his turn: "I suspect that the two large columns which supported the roof of the transept before the fire of 1823 must have been removed from the pronaos of the Pantheon." This supposition is hardly acceptable.

[1] Compare Moneta: *Inscript. antiq. S. Pauli,* Rome, 1654; de Rossi: *Inscript. Christ.* II, *passim;* Nicolai: *della Basilica di S. Paolo,* chap. X, Rome, 1815. The exact number of the inscriptions set into the pavement was *nine hundred and thirty-one.*

[2] While Julian the Apostate was tarrying in Tarsus of Cilicia, a priest of Æsculapius named Arthemius addressed to him a request for the restitution of the columns which the local bishop had removed from the temple of the god.

The roof is said to have been covered with tiles of gilt bronze. If this were really the case, it would be interesting to know where they were taken from, considering that those of the temple of Venus and Rome, of the Capitolium, and of the Pantheon had already been transferred to the roof of Saint Peter's. I suggest, as a working hypothesis, that they had once pertained to the temple of Apollo on the Palatine, which we know to have been destroyed by fire in the night between the 18th and 19th of March, A.D. 363. Considering that not one of them is left, it is evident that they must have fallen prey to some barbaric invaders, such as the Langobards, who in 739 took possession of the Basilica and robbed it of every scrap of metal; or the hordes of King Desider, who followed the Langobards' example in 773; or the Saracens in their inroad of 846.

A curious discovery was made some years ago by Pietro Rocchi in connection with this last invasion of Moslem pirates. While excavating the remains of a temple in the farm of La Valchetta, six miles below Rome, on the road to Ostia, he discovered traces of a Saracenic camp, consisting mainly of daggers and poniards with carved blades of Oriental make. The infidels had overthrown the temple: but its columns, frieze, and capitals were found lying *in situ* together with an excellent statue of Bacchus in Pentelic marble. The statue, slightly restored by Fabi-Altini, became in 1863 the property of W. W. Story, the eminent sculptor, and is now shivering, I suppose, under the frigid climate of North America.

When the roof of Saint Paul's was first examined by experts, such as Nicolai, Nibby, and Moneta, they found that, except a small section once covered with bronze sheets, all of it was patched, mended, and repaired with

PORTRAIT STATUE OF POPE BONIFACE IX

classic brick tiles dating from the consulship of Pætinus and Apronianus, A.D. 123, to that of Commodus and Lateranus, A.D. 154. No chronological value could therefore be attributed to them: they were simply spoils of ruinous edifices, or else remnants of the stock stored from past ages in the imperial brick-kilns. A few, however, belong to the history of the Basilica: such as those marked with the name of its builder, D(*ominus*) N(*oster*) FL(*avius*) VALENTINIANVS AVG(*ustus*): of its restorer D(*ominus*) N(*oster*) THEODERICVS, and of the Popes who had made extensive repairs, MARTINVS V, ALEXANDER VII, and CLEMENT X.[1]

In one particular, however, Saint Paul's can claim supremacy over contemporary structures, namely, in the possession of beautiful and glorious mosaics, such as the one of the Triumphal Arch of Honorius and Placidia, illustrated by de Rossi in his "Mosaici delle Chiese di Roma." Another, Honorius (the third of that name, namely, Pope Onorio Savelli, 1216–27), has linked his name to this kind of decoration, as proved by his letter addressed to Doge Piero Ziani on January 23, 1218, in which he begs the Republic of Venice to send to Rome workmen skilled in mosaic work, that the renovation of the Basilica might be accomplished with due expedition and success. It seems that the Venetian contingent entered upon its duties in 1226, under the guidance of Pietro Cavallini, and finished the decoration of the Tribune under the management of Arnulphus Sacrista, and of Gaetano Orsini, who became Pope Nicholas III in 1277. The mosaics of the façade *were* also the work of Cavallini. I say *were* because the gaudy and shiny substitutes of the present day are but a pitiful imitation of the originals. I have in my collection a set of drawings

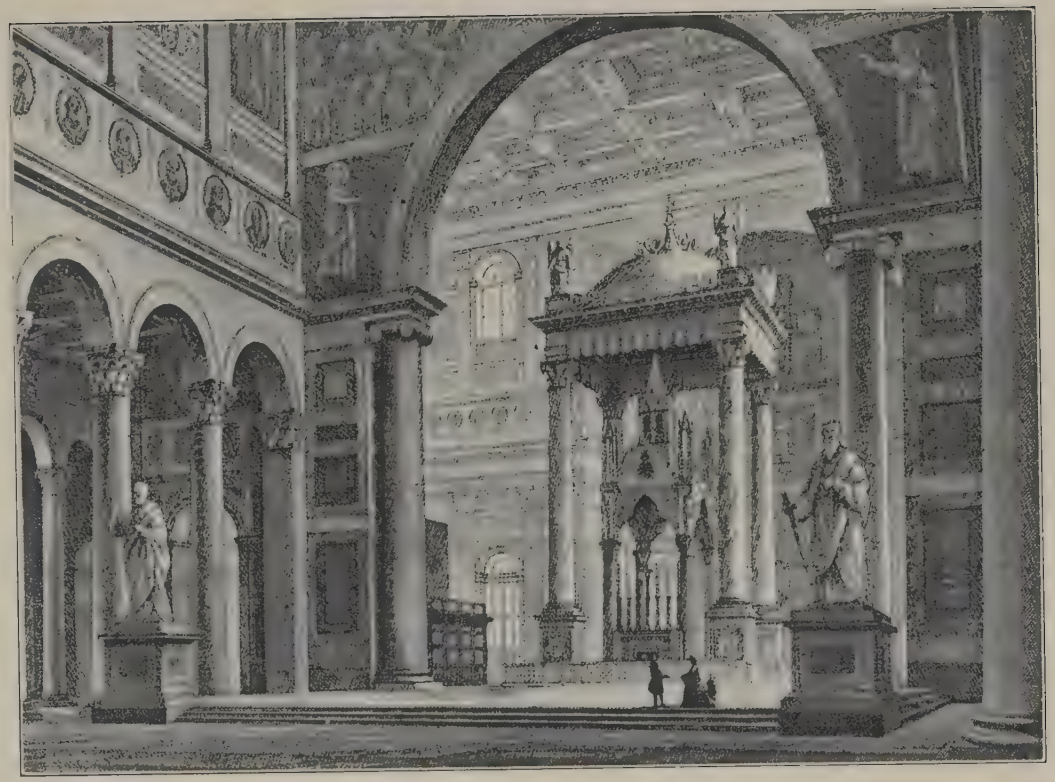
[1] Compare Antonio Nibby: *Il tempio della Pace*, p. 21. Rome, 1819.

and engravings representing the exact condition of the mosaics of the arch of Placidia, of the Tribune, and of the façade before their wholesale restoration.

As far as the set of portraits of the Popes is concerned (executed at the mosaic workshop of the Vatican), it is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that those previous to the fifteenth century are all imaginary likenesses. I recommend to the attention of the visitor one of them, the medallion of Felix III (483–92), who, with his wife, whom he had married when a simple deacon of the church, was the only Pope ever buried in Saint Paul's. Felix III was also connected with Gordianus, Tharsilla, Æmiliana, and other illustrious ancestors of Gregory the Great, as explained by de Rossi ("Inscrip. Chr.," I, 371), and Duchesne ("Liber Pontificalis," I, 252). The illustration on page 151 represents an exceedingly rare portrait-statue of Pope Boniface IX (1389–1404) which was saved from the wreckage of 1823. There were probably more.

Another letter, addressed in 1322 by Abbot Adenolph and his monks to Pope John XXII (Jacques d'Euse, one of the Avignon secessionists), speaks of the pitiful state of the Basilica, gutted by a fire which had charred some of the trusses of the roof: "Basilica Doctoris Gentium quæ maxime *trabibus* dignoscitur indigere!" The populace of Rome, little caring for the faraway memorial of the Apostle Paul, had laid hands on two of the colossal beams of the roof,[1] and carried them to the Lateran, which also had been wrecked by a conflagration (May 6, 1308). Abbot Adenolph, therefore,

[1] These great beams had an historical value, having been brought all the way from the forests of distant Calabria by Sergius I (687–701) and Hadrian I. They measured seventy-three feet in length and nearly three feet in thickness.



THE FOUR ALABASTER COLUMNS GIVEN TO POPE GREGORY XVI BY MEHEMET ALI, VICEROY OF EGYPT

From an engraving

begs the Pope's representative in Rome, the Cardinal di San Angelo, to enforce the restitution of their property: a vain appeal, as proved by the evidence we possess of the ruinous state of the sanctuary all through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when cattle, grazing in the adjoining fields, would find shelter at night in the deserted nave and aisles.[1] When Cola di Rienzi visited the spot toward the middle of the fourteenth century, the fountain of Symmachus in the centre of the quadri-portico, crowned by a Bacchic kantaros, was still in a tolerable condition. A few years later, the whole structure had become a heap of ruins. Fra Giocondo da Verona looked in vain for the inscription of Leo I (a brilliant epigram inviting the faithful to purify themselves bodily and spiritually before entering the church); he could find only a fragment "lying among the nettles and thorns." It was probably to obviate the scandal of the sanctuary of the Apostle being turned into a cattle shed that the famous Pantaleone Castelli, "Consul Romanus," thought of having a bronze door made at his expense, rich and beautiful enough to be worthy of the place of honour for which it was destined. As there were no artists in Rome or central Italy skilled in tarsia and enamel work, he ordered the doors to be cast and inlaid at Constantinople, under the supervision of Abbot Hildebrand, who was proceeding to the East on a mission from Pope Alexander II. Staurakios, the distinguished bronze founder from the Island of Chios, made the castings. These things came to pass in the year 1070.

It seems that the appearance of these bronze doors at Saint Paul's brought a revival, in central and southern Italy, of niello and tarsia work: for there is no doubt that

[1] Hadrian I (772–95) had already paved the atrium with marble slabs to prevent oxen and horses from grazing upon the rich grass by which the atrium had been invaded. *Liber Pontificalis*, vol. I, p. 499.

Barisano da Trani, the maker of the doors of the cathedrals of Ravello, Monreale, and Trani, modelled, cast, inlaid, and chiselled them in imitation of the one of Saint Paul's. The fire of July 16, 1823, did considerable damage to the masterpiece of Staurakios: but some of its panels and parts of its frame were rescued from the burning embers, and are now decently exhibited in the Museum of the Abbey.

There is a marked distinction between the rebuilding of Saint Paul's after the fire of 1823, and the rebuilding of Saint Peter's after the collapse of the Constantinian structure. The latter was reconstructed (as we have seen in Chapter II) with the spoils of imperial Rome, while modern Saint Paul's is quite blameless on this score. Its granite columns were quarried at Baveno and Montorfano; its capitals and bases were carved in Carrara marble; the four alabaster shafts supporting the *baldacchino*[1] were given by Mehemet Ali, Khedive of Egypt; the malachite panels by Nicholas, Czar of Russia. The only classic materials made use of by Gregory XVI and Pius IX, after the disaster, are: the small columns of *bigio morato* in the chapel of Saint Benedict, from the ruins of Veii; the panels of *rosso*, *giallo*, and *pavonazzetto* sawn out of blocks found at the Marmorata, and the disks, or round slabs, set into the pavement, sliced, as it were, from the granite columns discovered in 1872 near the church of Santa Maria della Soca.

It may interest the reader to know that these disks were obtained by slicing into thin crusts ancient columns of great diameter. I have found the following memo-

[1] The altar under Arnolfo's *baldacchino* was formed by a marble sarcophagus decorated with scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Sixtus V removed it to his chapel at Santa Maria Maggiore.

randum in the "Archæological Diary" of Emiliano Sarti: [1] "In the year eighteen hundred and eighteen in the excavations of the Forum (made by the Duchess of Devonshire) a column of red granite was found near that of Phocas, which was allowed to remain undisturbed up to 1841, when Cardinal Antonio Tosti caused it to be removed to Saint Paul's, where it was sawn into slices for the pavement of the nave." In the year 1864, two more columns, discovered near the church of Santa Maria dell' Anima in a classic stonecutter's shed, were subjected to the same process of slicing, which provided Saint Paul's with some forty or fifty disks to be inserted in the pavement.

Before leaving the Basilica, I must go back to Vespignani's memoranda, where he claims to have seen the rough coffin of the Apostle enclosed in a cage of iron bars. The iron cage was there without doubt, and a stone coffin inside of it, but it would be unsafe to deduce from this state of things that the body of the "*Doctor Gentium*" was in it, because the "Liber Pontificalis" distinctly says that Constantine had enclosed the mummified corpse *in arca* of bronze, like that of Saint Peter, while we know from the same unquestionable authority that this bronze sarcophagus was stolen by the Saracens in 846.

The iron cage seen by Vespignani rested on a bed of marble blocks on one of which were engraved the letters SALVS POPVLI (the salvation of the people), the interpretation of which, easy as it may appear, is subject to grave difficulties: in fact, ignoring whether it is pagan or Christian, whether whole or fragmentary, I cannot suggest a meaning which would be acceptable to the

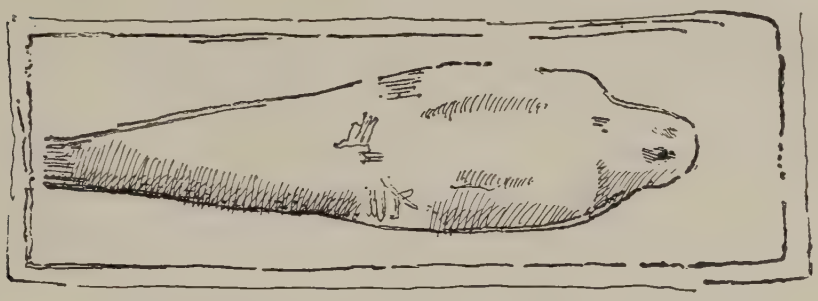
[1] Published in *Archivio Storia Patria*, vol. IX, a. 1886.

reader. The ground near the cage was thick with other coffins (not less than twelve, probably many more). The corpses seemed to vie with each other in the attempt to

gain the nearest possible place to the Apostle. For this purpose they were piled one above the other, without any consideration for the rights of the first occupant. Such a state of things makes us think of the perfect similarity between the Vespignani excavations of 1850 for the erection of four alabaster columns of the canopy, and those made by Bernini in 1626 for the erection of the four bronze spiral columns of the *baldacchino* in Saint Peter's.[1] In both cases we have the graves crowding around the central one, some at the level of the floor, some piled on the top of others, some for a single corpse, some for two. The corpses were dressed in long robes, darkened by age, and wound with bands of linen in the

[1] Compare what I have already written on this subject in *Pagan and Christian Rome*, chap. III, p. 129.

manner of babies. All the heads were turned toward the Apostolic grave.



ONE OF THE MUMMIES

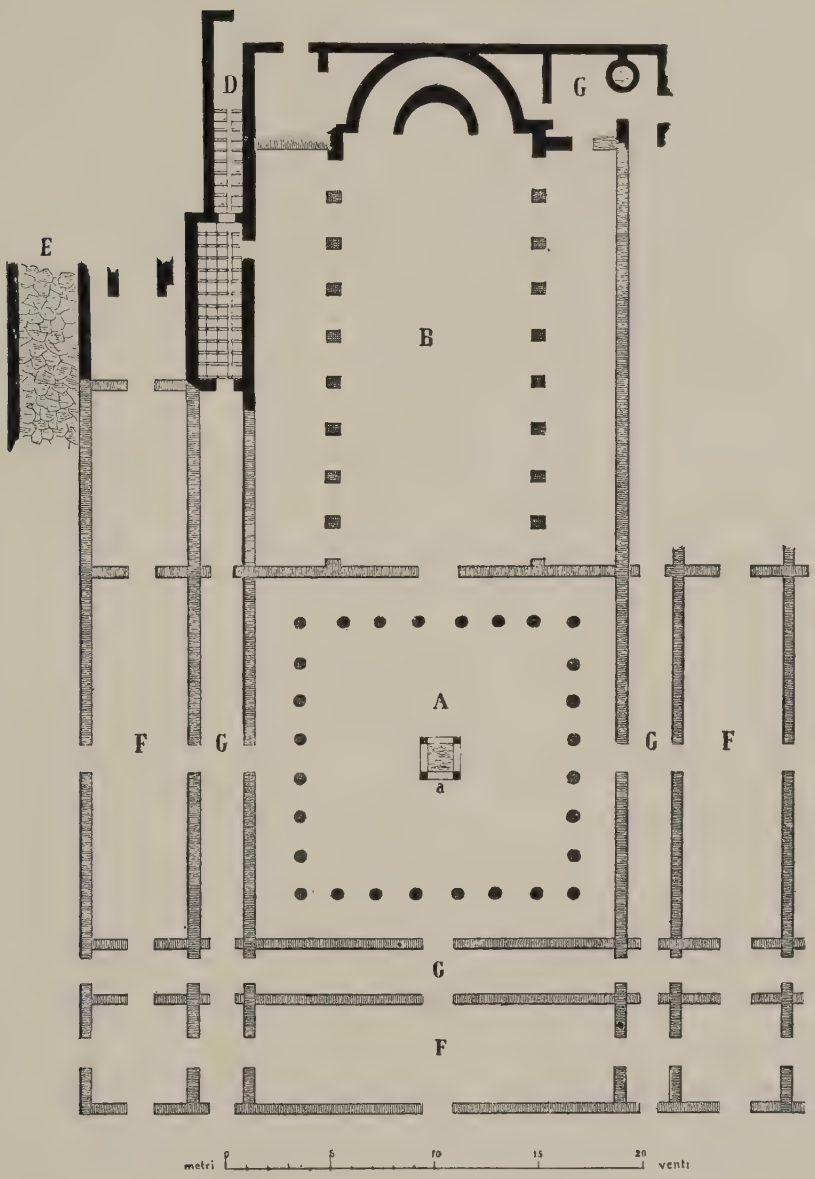
In describing the hospices and dormitories and infirmaries, on our way from the gate to Johannipolis, I remarked that no traces of such charitable institutions are at present to be found in the neighborhood of the Basilica; they have been obliterated by age and by the indifference of men. But what I have not found in Johannipolis I have found at Porto, the landing-place of the pilgrims from beyond the sea. I shall always treasure among the happy recollections of my early days the discovery in 1867 of the *Xenodochium Pammachii*, midway between the outer harbour of Claudius, and the inner dock of Trajan. The account of this wonderful discovery was given by de Rossi and by myself in the "Bollettino di Archeologia Cristiana" of the same year (pp. 5–99). According to Saint Jerome, the hospice was built and endowed by Pammachius, a Senator, a relative and friend of Marcella, whom contemporary historians call the most noble among the Roman Christians. Jerome and Pammachius had been schoolfellows in the classroom of Victorinus, who is praised by Saint Augustine as the leading rhetorician of his age. After the death of Pammachius's young wife, Paulina, the sorrowing widower

devoted himself to the solace of the poor, and, in addition to the innumerable charities founded in Rome, he built a hospice for the housing of pilgrims who landed at Porto from the provinces of northern Africa and Spain. The building, which I investigated inch by inch with the utmost care, comprised at least five wards, capable of accommodating three or four hundred beds, and made independent of each other by means of corridors opening on the inner quadrangle. Many and rich were the objects discovered in the excavations, of which I shall mention but two: the ritual well in the centre of the court, on the rim of which was engraved the verse of Saint Jerome, "*quisque sitit veniat cupiens haurire fluenta*," and the collection of silver utensils for the use of the guests: such as drinking-cups with the symbol of the cross, a plate with the Constantinian monogram, large trays with fluted rims, a beautiful bronze lamp, a set of silver spoons, and many glass goblets and dishes. Describing these finds, de Rossi says that no forks were discovered because they were unknown to the ancients. This is not exact. I have found one, of chiselled silver, in February, 1874, in the Piazza Margana, near the Capitol. It was described by Castellani in the "Bollettino Archeologico Comunale di Roma." [1]

It is probable that the greedy instincts of the workmen nullified the intention of the owner of Porto, and author of the excavations, Prince Alessandro Torlonia, to offer to Pius IX for the "Museo Cristiano" the complete set of the silverware; because about the time of the Porto excavations nine other silver spoons came into the antiquarian market, of which seven were purchased

[1] Vol. II, p. 116, pl. IX. The merit of having introduced into England this useful little article belongs to Thomas Coryate, who mentions the fact in his *Crudities* (London, 1611), p. 90.

THE THREE CHURCHES AD AQUAS SALVIAS



PLAN OF THE HOSPICE OF PAMMACHIUS DISCOVERED AT PORTO

by Castellani, one by Mr. Wilshere, one by the Vatican. Each of them was marked with a cross, a number, and a name; as + ALEXANDER + FAVSTVS + QVADRAGESIMA + IRENEVS + PROTASIVS, etc.

The example of Pammachius found imitators all through the Middle Ages. Francesco Vecchi, for instance, the charitable owner of two adjoining houses in the parish of Santi Lorenzo and Damaso, stipulated in his will, dated 1348 (the year of the Great Plague), that they should be turned into a hospital capable of accommodating twelve patients, with a chapel where mass could be said once a week. Of Pammachius himself we have a vivid recollection in Rome, in the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo on the Cælian Hill, named from him *titulus Pammachii.*[1]

We could not bring to a proper end our study of the grave of Saint Paul, without paying a visit to the group of sanctuaries called in ancient times "ad Aquas Salvias," in modern times, "le tre Fontane." The group comprises three churches, one called the "Decapitation," the second, "Santa Maria Scalacœli," the third, Saints Vincent and Anastasius. The best known of the three is the one connected with the tradition of the martyrdom of the Apostle. Its three springs are said to have burst forth when the head, severed from the body, made three bounds on the grassy slope. The well-known physician Baccio, who wrote his book "De Thermis" in 1567, does not corroborate the legend when he asserts that the waters of these so-called holy springs are "thick, heavy, tepid, and indigestible." At all events, the connection of the springs at Aquas Salvias with the execution of the

[1] I have described this house-sanctuary in *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 159.

THE BRIDGE ON THE ROAD TO OSTIA OVER THE RIVER ALMO, CROSSED BY SAINT PAUL ON HIS WAY TO EXECUTION

Apostle is comparatively modern, while the fact of the execution, without the bounding of the head, is mentioned by Gregory the Great in his act of donation to the abbey of the adjoining farmland. Gregory explains the reason for the gift in these words: "It seems to me preposterous that the particular field in which he was beheaded should not pertain to the sanctuary which bears his name."

When the half-abandoned abbey, one of the worst centres of malarial fever, was entrusted to the care of the Trappist Fathers in 1867, many relics of the old churches and monasteries were brought to light, among which was a marble slab inscribed on one side with the name of Pope Sergius I, A.D. 689, on the other with an Armenian inscription dated 1267. Other relics proved that, as far back as the seventh century, the name of Paul was connected with this unhealthy and poisonous locality.

I have seen and trodden the crossroad which led from the Via Ostiensis to the place of execution at the Aquæ Salviæ. It had undergone no repair since its first establishment at the time of Nero, and its pavement was in excellent condition. Therefore I feel perfectly sure of having had the privilege of following in the footsteps of the Apostle.

I have also to mention another curious discovery. The apocryphal Greek Acts of Saint Paul, edited by Tischendorff, assert that the Apostle was beheaded near the three springs under a stone pine. In 1875, when the Trappists were excavating the foundations of a water-tank behind the apse of the central chapel, they found a mass of coins of Nero, together with several pine-cones, fossilized by age and by the pressure of the earth.

Visitors entering the main gate of the Tre Fontane cannot fail to notice a set of rough pictures on the

vaulted ceiling representing the possessions of the monks in the Middle Ages, the extent and value of which amounted almost to those of a full-sized province. These possessions stretched along the Maremma coast, from the town of Orbetello to the mouth of the Tiber, a distance of nearly one hundred miles

The same thing may be said of the abbey of San Saba, which owned the territory from the said mouth of the Tiber, eastward, to Capo Circeo.

Adding to these properties the immense landed estates of Saint Paul, catalogued and described by the "Liber Pontificalis," we come to the conclusion that a handful of illiterate and ignorant monks must have owned some four hundred square miles of the richest soil of central Italy.

A visit to Saint Paul's offers the pilgrim many charming reminiscences. One concerns Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the "Company of Jesus," who, on April 22d of the year 1541, while on a pilgrimage to the "Seven Churches" with his followers, made a vow before the image of the Blessed Virgin — the same which is now exhibited in the Chapel of the Crucifixion — to observe the rules of the Brotherhood. Another concerns the vision of Saint Bridget when the crucified Redeemer was alleged to have addressed to her divine words of encouragement. Such was the veneration of the people for this figure of Christ (said to have been carved by Piero Cavallini), and so great the number of the faithful who paid homage to it on the first Sunday of each month, that Pope Benedict XIII was obliged to locate it in a more accessible place. The statue of Saint Bridget in the same chapel was modelled by Stefano Maderno.

For British visitors, previous to the fire of 1823, the

THE UNGAINLY BELL-TOWER OF THE BASILICA OSTIENSIS
ERECTED AFTER THE FIRE

Basilica possessed an additional interest, because it was the church of which the Kings of England, prior to the Reformation, were the patrons and the protectors, as the sovereigns of Austria, France, and Spain were respectively of the Vatican, of the Lateran, and of Santa Maria Maggiore. We have, as a souvenir of these times, a shield bearing the arms of the abbot of Saint Paul's, a hand grasping a sword, surrounded by the ribbon of the Order of the Garter, with the motto: "Honi soit qui mal y pense."

Another link connecting Saint Paul's with the Anglo-Saxon countries is to be found in the discovery made in 1843 of a treasure of more than a thousand silver pennies concealed in a dark hole in the old belfry. They dated from the end of the tenth to the first half of the eleventh century and bore the mark of sixty-two different mints. Comparing this treasure trove with similar ones found in 1611 in the County of Lancaster, in 1871 at the Tre Fontane, and in 1884 in the House of the Vestals, we come to the conclusion that they represent contributions for the maintenance of Anglo-Saxon institutions in Rome, contributions better known by the name of "Peter's pence."

CHAPTER IV

THE BASILICA SALVATORIS (SAINT JOHN THE LATERAN)[1]

It is a current opinion that after the execution of Plautius Lateranus in A.D. 66, for his share in the plot of the Pisones, his beautiful palace on the Cælian was confiscated by Nero. No classic author mentions such a contingency, probably because it was only a temporary seizure by the police, eager to discover tangible proofs of the plotter's guilt. On the other side we are told that Sextius Lateranus, consul A.D. 196, a descendant of Nero's victim, was offered large sums of money by Septimius Severus toward the restoration of the ancestral estate on that sunny hill. This account is corroborated by the discovery made in 1595 of water-pipes bearing the names of the two brothers Sextius and Torquatus. Another lead pipe, inscribed with the name of Severus Alexander, Emperor 222–35, found among the ruins of the palace in 1890, seems to indicate that it had become State property in the first half of the third century, unless the water was canalized for the use of the barracks of the "Equites Singulares" (Horse Guards) adjoining the imperial residence. It remained State property until the time of Maximinian, who gave it to Constantine on the occasion of his marriage with Maximinian's own daughter, Fausta. Hence the name of "*domus Faustæ*," which we find given to it by contemporary documents. Constantine must have offered it to Pope Miltiades in 313, the date of the Edict of Milan. Perhaps it was simply a loan for the temporary

[1] A copious if not complete bibliography of the Lateran is to be found in Kehr's *Regesta*, vol. II, pp. 22, 24.

A VIEW OF THE LATERAN FROM THE GROUNDS OF THE VILLA WOLKONSKY

accommodation of the bishops convened in council, on the second day of October of that year. I, myself, do not yet understand what happened in those days. One point is certain, that the Constantinian Basilica, dedicated to the Saviour,[1] occupies a large section of the *domus Faustæ*, as well as a section of the *Castra Nova Equitum Singularium*, the two buildings being separated by a street which was found in 1854, when Pius IX was restoring the canopy of Urban V. The reader who wishes to know exactly the mutual relationship of the three edifices, the palace, the barracks, and the basilica, ought to consult sheet 37 of my "Forma Urbis," keeping in mind that the classic buildings of pre-Constantinian age lie twenty-two feet and a half under the pavement of the church. The history of their transformation and amalgamation into one building is hardly hinted at by the "Liber Pontificalis." "Eodem tempore [namely, in the pontificate of Sylvester, 314–35] fecit Constantinus basilicam Constantinianam"; and not another word, save in connection with the Baptistery described as a holy basin cut in porphyry with spikets of pure silver, and a porphyry column in the centre supporting lamps, etc. The institution was well provided with a patrimony of its own, including extensive farms in Numidia, in the Ionian Islands, Sicily, Mauretania, Latium, Campania, and Sabina.

[1] It appears from this statement that the original denomination of the Sanctuary was "*Basilica Salvatoris*." In 1144 Pope Lucius II transformed it into that of "Saint John the Baptist" and "Saint John the Evangelist": while to-day we use the hybrid designation of "San Giovanni in Laterano." The image of the Saviour on the top of the Constantinian apse, the first one ever seen by the people of Rome outside the catacombs, was held in profound veneration all through the Middle Ages. I have found a document dated February 28, 1398, by which a lawyer named Lorenzo de Ovidis leaves a legacy of ten pounds of silver pennies toward the maintenance of the oil lamps which burned day and night before the "image of the Saviour."

It is a remarkable coincidence that neither the name of Constantine, the founder of the church, nor that of Fausta, the murdered Empress, nor that of Pope Miltiades, nor of any other personage who took part in the christianization of the palace, remained attached to it. The name of the principal sanctuary in Christendom (*Urbis et Orbis Mater et Caput*) is that of a fellow-conspirator of the Pisones, used not in the form of a *gentilicium* (Plautius), as it ought to be, but of a simple surname (Lateranus). Who could have told the victim of Nero's revenge, while led to execution in the Campus Lateranensis, that he would become one of the most famous personages in the world, and that his name would be attached to a basilica the future existence of which was not even dreamed of in those times of persecution?

The history of the Lateran is the history of the Christian religion from its first official recognition in 313 (the date of the Edict of Milan) to the demolition of the "Patriarchium" perpetrated by Sixtus V in 1586–87. It would be impossible to encompass it within the limits of a single chapter, especially as regards the gigantic fight between the Holy See and the German Emperors, which did leave indelible marks on the Lateran group of buildings.

A name, no less strictly connected with it, is that of Hildebrand the monk, who became Gregory VII, and a prominent figure among the makers of mediæval history. The memory of these events, which secured tremendous powers for the Papacy, without being offensive to the imperial party, was perpetuated in the Lateran Palace by means of two sets of pictures: one, strictly political and historical, in the hall of the Consistory; the other, of a religious character, in the Oratory of Saint Nicholas. The lead was followed by Gregory's succes-

sors [1] to such an extent that the Patriarchium became the illustrated record-book of the Papacy. So conclusive was considered the evidence of these frescoes and of the texts by which their meaning was explained, that on many occasions they were regarded as the "ultima ratio" of diplomatic controversy. Such, for instance, was the case of the fresco, representing the Emperor Barbarossa kneeling before Pope Alexander III in Venice, which gave rise to such an explosion of anger that the Republic actually made military preparations to invade the States of the Church. The controversy ended with the public disgrace of poor Monsignore Contelori who had dictated the offensive text.[2]

The panel representing the signing of the Treaty of Worms suffered no damage for a long period, but at the end of the sixteenth century ignorant restorers altered its significance; in the seventeenth century the frescoes of the Consistory were obliterated, and in the eighteenth the Oratory of Saint Nicholas was destroyed. Every lover of history and of its teaching, to say nothing of the professional archæologist, must deplore such acts of wanton destruction, committed in good faith by ignorant agents, without any excuse whatsoever. By an extraordinary chance, however, descriptions and drawings of both sets of frescoes have been discovered in the Church archives, by means of which my master de Rossi has been able to reconstruct the whole series in a memoir published in 1881 under the title "Antiche Pitture nell' Oratorio di S. Nicola entro il Palazzo Lateranense."

[1] Victor III, Urban II, Paschal II, Gelasius, etc.

[2] In 1388 a Venetian soldier named Jacopo Gradenigo, while wandering among the crumbling remains of the Patriarchium, saw traces of a fresco representing "the history of the discord between Alexander III and Barbarossa, and the scene of the victory gained by the Venetian army, under the leadership of Sebastiano Ziani."

As I have already remarked, the history of the Christian Lateran is the history of the Christian world, from the downfall of the Empire to the end of the sixteenth century. The Patriarchium, with its adjoining chapels, shrines, oratories, etc., took the place, during that eventful period, of the classic Capitol, and the Basilica of Constantine became the cathedral of the Rome of the Apostles. Here came the Countess Mathilda of Canossa to ratify her donation to the Church; here, under the presidency of Innocent III, was held a council for the deposition of Emperor Otho; here was proclaimed the Fourth Crusade; and here the voice of Cola di Rienzo was heard thundering against the oppressors of the people, during his brief leadership of 1346.

Twenty-eight Popes are known to have been buried in the Lateran: Paschal II, Calixtus II, Honorius II, Serge IV, Innocent II, Lucius II, Anastasius IV, Alexander III, etc., but very few of their epitaphs and graves have escaped mutilation or destruction. De Rossi's "Inscr. Christ.," vol. II, and Duchesne's "Liber Pontificalis" contain excellent information on this subject. It seems that the Lateran was connected in a special way with the "Usurpers of the Holy See" and with the deepest degradation in the history of mediæval Rome, when we read of pontificates lasting only weeks, or even days, as that of Boniface VI (fifteen days), of Theodore II (twenty days), and of Benedict V (sixty-three days). There were forty-nine Popes in two hundred years, elected, for the greater part, in opposition to the Canon Laws, as Martinus II (882–84), Formosus (891–96), and John X (914–28); the election being secured by an open purchase of votes, as at the time of the Prætorians. In the few extant epitaphs Popes are called wolves and un-

clean. The extent to which the moral sense of men was blunted in those dark days may be inferred from the fact that the paternity of John XI is registered in the official "Liber Pontificalis" in words that are unprintable.[1]

Toward the beginning of this troubled period, which centred round the Patriarchium Lateranense, the loss of revenue from the contributions of pilgrims and from the shrinkage of Peter's pence was partly offset from a new and unexpected source. In the pontificate of Stephen VI (885–91), the Basilica of Constantine collapsed. Negligently built, with little or no static connection between its various structural parts, it had begun, long before Stephen's rule, to show symptoms of decay. The upper walls of the nave, badly supported by columns differing in height and strength, bulged outwards so far that the ends of the beams supporting the roof came out of their sockets, and caused the downfall of the whole structure. In the Basilica had been accumulated in the course of centuries untold treasures and, as Caius Marius had stolen from the smouldering ruins of the Capitol several thousand pounds of gold, and Julius Cæsar had gathered equally large sums of money from the demolition of the temple of Pietas, so the "Usurpers of the Apostolic See" bore away from the Lateran all its treasures, all its furniture of gold and silver, all the sacred utensils, and *ex-votos*.[2]

John IX had already begun in 900 to remove the

[1] "Le fait que l'on ait pu enregistrer une telle paternité dans les catalogues officiels donne une idée de ce que l'opinion tolerait encore." (Duchesne, vol. II, p. 242.)

[2] The pagan habit of putting up in the treasure-house of well-known sanctuaries *ex-votos* of terracotta, mostly representing parts of the human body which had been set right by the intercession of that special god, was accepted and followed by the Christians, as certified by Theodoretus (*Sermo de martyribus*), who mentions eyes, feet, and hands of silver, gold, and clay.

rubbish and to repair the consequences of the downfall, but the woodmen and carpenters, sent by him to cut timber in the forests of the Marsican district, had been chased away by "malitiosi homines." In 906, however, Pope Sergius III was able to bring the restoration to a satisfactory issue, as certified by the "Liber Pontificalis" in these words: "Serge has rebuilt the Basilica of Constantine, as declared in the inscriptions which can be read to the present day on each side of the high altar."

I have said before that few epitaphs of mediæval Popes buried in the Lateran have escaped destruction. One, of which I have already spoken in "Pagan and Christian Rome" (p. 235), and which is still set into the wall of the corridor, pertains to Sylvester II (999–1003), a Frenchman, Gerbert by name, who is described as an expert in necromancy, which he had studied while travelling in the Hispano-Arabic provinces. He is said to have carried in his travels a kind of diabolical oracle, a brazen head, which uttered prophetic answers. Tradition asserts that his sins were pardoned by God, and that he was given a decent burial in the Lateran. A mysterious influence, however, hung over his grave. Whenever one of his successors was approaching the end of life, the bones of Sylvester would rattle in their vault, and the marble lid would be moistened with drops of water. It is a case of misinterpretation of the poem inscribed over his grave, which begins with the distich:

Iste locus mundi Silvestri membra sepulti
Venturo domino conferet ad sonitum.

The simple-minded contemporaries saw in the words "*venturo domino*" an allusion to the coming, not of the Sovereign judge, but of the future Pope, and in the expression "*ad sonitum*" a reference, not to the angelic

THE OLD APSE OF THE LATERAN BASILICA, DESTROYED IN 1884

trumpets, but to the rattling of the bones. No wonder that such misinterpretations could be made in an age of utter ignorance, ready to believe anything in the line of superstition: witness the inscription in letters of gold and enamel on a blue ground, still affixed to the wall of the modernized Leonine Gallery, giving the inventory of the relics which were believed to be concealed somewhere in the Basilica. The list comprises: the Table of the Last Supper; two goblets full of the tears which our Lord shed when transfixed by the spear of Longinus; pieces of his cradle; samples of his robe; one of his handkerchiefs; the Ark of the Old Testament; the Tables of the Law; the rods of Moses and Aaron; and many other things, a description of which can be found in Moroni's "Dictionary of Erudition."[1]

As a rule the Popes were laid to rest in marble coffins. In fact, one of the specialties of the Lateran was the beauty, number, and value of the bathing-basins cut in the rarest kinds of marble, which were put under the altars to contain corpses or holy relics of martyrs and confessors of the faith. The Thermæ of Caracalla were essentially the happy hunting-ground for this extraordinary kind of coffins and sarcophagi. Crescimbeni, the historian of "San Giovanni," after mentioning the basin of porphyry used by Constantine as his own baptismal font, adds: "The basin is no longer in the Baptistery, having perished in one of the many catastrophes of the Lateran: but we see in its place 'una bellissima urna di basalto' removed from one of the Roman thermæ." Francesco Albertino also speaks of other porphyritic urns scattered in the Campus Lateranensis, the best known being the sarcophagus of Saint Helena, originally placed in her mausoleum (now called *Tor Pignattara*)

[1] Vol. XII, pp. 21, 22.

on the Via Labicana. Pope Anastasius IV (1153–54), who had chosen this imperial sarcophagus for his grave, had it transferred to the vestibule of the Lateran, beside the Porta Santa. It was damaged in the fire of Clement V, and clumsily pieced together in 1309. Pius VI caused the sarcophagus to be thoroughly restored and exhibited in the "Sala della Croce Greca" of the Vatican Museum, — with the help of twenty-five sculptors and stone-carvers, who were uninterruptedly engaged for nine years in the work of restoration.[1]

(Ca. 857.) Connected with the history of the Lateran is the legend of the Papessa Giovanna,[2] the most extraordinary, the most popular, the most discussed creation of fanciful mediæval minds.

On the 17th day of July, 857, Leo IV, the builder of the Leonine City, passed away, and, immediately after, his successor Benedict III took possession of the Holy See. Legend inserts a third personage between the two, a woman in a man's garb, who called herself John VIII. Her name is variously given as Agnes, or Gilbertha, or Johanna; her birthplace is also uncertain, mention being made of the British Isles, of the town of Metz, and of the small city of Ingelheim. She is alleged, besides, to have

[1] The marble bathtubs used for the interment of the Popes were nearly all cut in porphyry or serpentine. In A.D. 1193 Innocent II was buried "in concha porphiretica miro opere sculpta" (of marvellous workmanship). John the Deacon adds that it was believed to have been removed from Hadrian's mausoleum. The grave was located at the eastern end of the south aisle. Having been damaged in the fire of Clement V, the skeleton was removed to Santa Maria in Trastevere, and a new epitaph engraved, which is still to be seen, among the relics collected under the porch of that church: "hic requiescunt ossa Domini Innocentii p.p. II de Domo Paparescorum" (one of the most famous Trasteverine families of the early Middle Ages).

[2] Compare Cancellieri: *Possessi*, pp. 201, 507; Döllinger: *die Papstfäbeln;* Chevalier: *Biobibliographie*, p. 2253; Besso: *Rivista di Roma*, 1907; Tommasetti: *Bollettino Arch. Com.* (1907), vol. xxxv, p. 82.

entered a Benedictine sisterhood at Mayence; to have gained a diploma in the University of Athens; and to have opened a school in the Greek quarter of Rome, where she won such consideration that, when the next vacancy occurred (after the demise of Leo IV), she was elected Pope amidst universal applause and great rejoicings.

The plot worked successfully for a certain time, until one day she forgot her rather complicated duties, and became intimate with a former schoolfellow. It was at this juncture that the Evil One appeared to the Papessa in distress, to warn her that her punishment would take place while she proceeded in state to the Lateran, and that a child would be born unto her on the public highroad. The legend ends with a statement that precautions were taken at once to prevent any possible recurrence of the event, and that a new itinerary was chosen to avoid the one in which the ignominy had taken place (according to Marianus Scotus, between the Coliseum and the church of Saint Clement).

It is an astonishing fact that, notwithstanding its absurdity, the legend should not have been unanimously acknowledged at once by mediæval historians. Arguments in favour of the allegation are given by Spanheim, "Exercit. de papa femina" (II, 577), in L'Enfant's "Histoire de la papesse Joanne"; others, against it, by Allatius's "Confutatio Fabulæ de Johanne papissa," in Lequieu's "Orbis Christianus" (III, 777). Arguments on both sides are given in Cunningham's translation of Geiseler, "Lehrbuch" (II, 21–22).

The truth is that the tradition was kept alive by some kind of badly interpreted monumental coincidence, referring, first, to the precautions taken to ascertain the sex of the newly elected pontiff; secondly to a marble

group of a mother nursing her newborn babe, alleged to represent Johanna and the consequences of her sin; thirdly, substitution of a different street from the ones by which the pontifical pageants had for centuries approached the Lateran.

The first excuse for popular credulity is to be found in the fact that in the vestibule leading to the Pontifical Hall, three classic marble chairs were kept, two of which were exquisitely carved in *rosso antico*, one in white marble.[1] In the middle of the seat they have a circular opening contracting in front to a slit, hence their name of *sellæ stercorariæ*, or sitz-baths, given to them (and to others of the same kind, found in the Roman thermæ). Another supposition suggested by antiquarians is that the holes were meant to allow steam to reach and envelop the body more freely. A final conjecture is that the holes were made for the sake of coolness, forerunners of the circular air-cushions used in modern times for the same purpose. At all events, the simple-minded people came to consider the three Lateran chairs as a symbol of the nullity and vanity of mundane thoughts. As a result, a new rite was instituted which required the newly elected Pope to sit upon one of these chairs, while the choir sang the verse "de stercore erigens pauperem," to show that a man could raise himself from a mud-heap to the highest position in the world.

The oldest record of this practice dates from A.D. 1099 and from the coronation of Paschal II, which took place about two hundred years after the alleged death of Johanna. It is mentioned again in 1124 at the election of Honorius II, and so successively until the pontificate

[1] One of the *rosso antico* chairs is now exhibited in the "Gabinetto delle Maschere" of the Vatican Museum; the other is now in the Louvre. I am ignorant of the present location of the third.

of Hadrian VI, the stern Dutch prelate, who absolutely refused to lend himself to the experiment, of which popular guidebooks, of the "Mirabilia" species, say: "Supra palatium ante Sancta Sanctorum [the private Chapel of the Popes, under the invocation of Saint Lawrence] sunt duæ sedes, in quibus consideratur papa an masculus sit an femina."

The second justification for the popular and vulgar belief in the legend of Johanna is to be found in the fact that the State pageant on its way to the Lateran did actually quit the highroad at Saint Clement's. Martin von Troppau speaks of this deviation as far back as 1278, and Adam de Usk writes, about 1400: "The Pope deflects from the right path near Saint Clement's, as a sign of detestation for the sin of Pope *Agnes*, which is recorded by a *marble group* representing the pope-mother and her infant." The existence of such a group is absolutely certain. Döllinger has found it mentioned in a document of 1283. The earliest editions of the "Mirabilia" locate the group "in platea Sancti Clementis (ubi iacet ymago que dicitur papa femina cum puero)" and an old scholiast of Martin Polonus adds that the abandoned highroad to the Lateran was denominated "*Vicus Papissæ*."

Now, considering that in 1588 Sixtus V effaced the last vestige of the Vicus, so as to put an end to its absurd associations; that in the same year a statue representing a woman nursing her child made its first appearance in the Quirinal Gardens, which Pope Sixtus was in those very days laying out, as an annex to the summer palace of the Popes, and that at the present day there is exhibited in the Museo Chiaramonti Vaticano (fourth compartment), a group representing a woman nursing a baby, which has been brought over from the Quirinal

Gardens, I believe that we may safely assert that it is the identical group which gave rise, or at least confirmation, to the legend of the Papessa Giovanna.[1]

The reader will more willingly forgive the rather prominent place I have given to this episode in the chronicle of the Lateran, by remembering that the learned Pope Piccolomini, Pius II, gave permission to have the portrait-bust of his female predecessor added to the series exhibited in the Duomo di Siena. There it remained undisturbed until the pontificate of Clement VIII, who, in the general reorganization of the set, made in 1600 under the supervision of Cardinal Baronio, substituted for it the alleged likeness of an unheard-of Pope Zachary.

Finally, I may add that the street where Johanna had given birth to a child kept the name "*della Papessa*" until a comparatively recent age. In a deed kept in the Capitoline Archives a certain Giuseppe Pastaminuta, on May 8, 1517, grants to a friend the property of a canefield "situm apud Sanctum Pastorem, ubi vulgo dicitur *alla Papessa.*"

In 1361, while the canons were singing the "Magnificat," the negligence of a plumber engaged in repairing the roof caused a conflagration not unlike the one which destroyed Saint Paul's in 1823, and which I have described in the preceding chapter. On this occasion Francesco Petrarca addressed the well-known admonition to Pope Urban V (Guillaume de Grimoard), then enjoying the luxuries of life at Avignon: "How can you relish the attractions of your residence on the flowery

[1] Compare Helbig's *Führer* (English edit., 1895), p. 45, n. 77, where the usual denomination of Hera suckling Heracles is supplanted by the vague one of "a beneficent goddess given to the care of children."

JUNO NURSING HERCULES
Popularly known as the Papessa Giovanna

banks of the Rhone? How can you enjoy banqueting in halls with the ceiling of gold while the roofless Lateran, almost prone on the ground, lies exposed to wind and rain?" And here it may not be out of place to remark that, whenever in the Middle Ages or in the early Renaissance period costly ecclesiastical buildings were damaged or destroyed by inundations, fires, or earthquakes, and the Pope or the local bishops had not sufficient funds to repair them, an appeal was made to the faithful to share the expense. Of this practice we have splendid instances at Parenzo, Aquileia, Verona, Tivoli, Rome, etc. At Parenzo, for example, the pavement of the lower church is divided into square panels of various sizes with representations of wreaths, fish, animals, and the name of the contributor appended to each panel.

The same method was followed at the Lateran by Clement V after the fire of 1308, and by Urban V after the fire of 1361. They not only sent large sums of money from the pontifical chest at Avignon, but made an appeal to the King of Naples and Sicily, as leaseholder of the Holy See, to supply the timber for the roof of nave and aisles, and urged the faithful in general to contribute toward the repairs according to their means. The Pope's appeal did not fall on deaf ears: the contributions came, but at the expense of the classic ruins of the city. Thus, Urban V, by a Bull dated October 17, 1342, gave leave to the rebuilders of the Lateran to pull down the temple of Antoninus and Faustina on the Sacred Way, making an exception in favour of the front colonnade of Carystian marble, because it had already been placed under the protection of Saint Lawrence (San Lorenzo in Miranda).

In July, 1425, while Martin V was laying the beautiful cosmatesque pavement of the nave, the contractors

for the work, Antonio Picardi and Nicolao Bellini, received the Pope's permission to strip of their marbles all the ancient churches, within and without the walls, in which divine service was no longer practised. The contractors gave the grant a very broad interpretation and laid hands, not only on abandoned places of worship, but on the very tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. In a Brief dated March 29, 1436, Eugene IV complains that some precious slabs of porphyry and serpentine had been wrenched from the pontifical chair, "which was the altar of the most blessed Peter." The same Pope issued another Brief for the protection of the Coliseum against the "diggers of marbles," and yet I find that stones from the Coliseum were used by him for the restoration of the apse of the Lateran!

In the courtyard of the convent of Santi Domenico e Sisto is a column removed from the Lateran by Pius V in 1564, on the surface of which the following inscription is engraved: "This column Madonna Margherita Boccamazzi has presented to the Saviour on October, 1362, for the redemption of the soul of her husband." A second marble shaft was raised in 1363 by Margherita Ruggieri, for the soul of Giovanni Capoccia. Theodore Ameyden describes a third pillar on the plinth of which was written: "In the name of God, amen. In the year 1361 in the month of July, Tomeo degli Astalli has offered this column for the soul of Alexis his departed son." This interesting monolith, which Ameyden describes as "lying on the floor of the nave," disappeared at the time of Innocent X (1644–55).

To the year 1364 belongs the record of a similar deed so neatly expressed in the vernacular that I must give it in the original text: "March 13 4 Francesco Gothobuo de Milan fece fare queste do colonne in reverentia di

misser sancto Johanni battista in menti de anima soa."

Another reminder of the donations offered by people of various nationalities to help Clement V in his work of reconstruction is still to be found in the set of nineteen shields painted on wooden tablets in the south wing of the cloisters, each accompanied by the name of a Spanish knight from Aragona. There is a twentieth panel, inscribed as follows: "These memories of past ages have been renewed in the month of August, 1564, by the illustrious Señor don Luis de Requeze, former ambassador of His Catholic Majesty to the Holy See."

This praiseworthy habit of contributing to the welfare and maintenance of the Basilica dates from its early days. Panvinio saw in the old apse an inscription commemorating and praising the gift of a pontifical chair made at the expense of Flavius Constans Felix, consul A.D. 428, and of his wife Pandusia, in fulfilment of a vow.

In the year 1885, when the Viale Emmanuele Filiberto was being cut across the garden of the Passionist Fathers at the Scala Santa, a workshop of a mediæval marmorarius was discovered, with its usual characteristics of a sand floor, of classic marbles ready to be transformed into new shapes, of classic figures of men and animals to be used as models for fresh reproductions and imitations, and, above all, of rough blocks of porphyry, serpentine, giallo, and pavonazzetto, to be cut into small tesseræ for the composition of the so-called Alexandrine (cosmatesque) pavements. Apropos of which practices I must quote the evidence given by one of the exquisite figures of saints in high-relief now set up in the cloister of the Lateran, one of which (Saint John the Baptist) bears a speaking likeness of an Antinous. An Antinous

dating from the time of Hadrian has been found still standing in an upright position in the mediæval workshop of an unknown marmorarius, close to the National Bank in the Via Nazionale. An Æsculapius has been found in the workshop of the Vassalletti, the same artists, architects, and sculptors to whom we owe the splendid creation of the Lateran cloisters, where are to be seen two sphinxes supporting on their backs the columns at the western entrance, sphinxes undoubtedly copied from classic models. The door of Saint Anthony on the Esquiline is also flanked by columns supported by sphinxes. Some writers consider these figures of Egyptian monsters to be based on the tales of pilgrims and crusaders, but there was no necessity for the Vassalletti and their school to go so far for models or inspirations, considering that hundreds of Egyptian types were to be seen in the *dromoi* of the temple of Isis and Serapis in the Campus Martius, or in the portico of the Isis Metellina on the slope of the Esquiline, which last was within a short distance of both the Lateran and Sant' Antonio.

Besides the Vassalletti, who ornamented the cloisters about 1230, another marmorarius, Nicolas di Angelo di Paolo, has linked his name to the Lateran with his artistic ornamentation of the canopy.

The most gorgeous contribution to the embellishment of the Basilica was made in 1290 by Nicholas IV, who covered the apse with mosaics from the designs of Jacopo da Torrita and his pupil Jacopo da Camerino. The lower band, however, was perfected in 1292 by Gaddo Gaddi. Altogether, it was not a successful work; it was destined from the beginning to undergo either mutilation or almost complete renovation. Tradition says that when Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) ordered the image of Saint Anthony of Padua to be

THE CLOISTERS OF VASSALLECTUS

changed into that of Gregory I, the workmen detailed to carry the scheme into execution were hurled away by a mysterious power.

The actual mosaic of the Tribune is a fair imitation of the old, the last authentic pieces of which were obliterated together with the Leonine Apse in 1884.

(Ca. 1433–39.) Flavius Biondo, the Nestor of Roman topographers, addresses the thanks of his co-citizens to Eugene IV for having repaired the church and the Patriarchium, which had become well-nigh uninhabited, and for the adjacent monastery, built *ex novo*, in digging the foundations of which, Biondo says, eighteen feet underground were found remains of a magnificent edifice, with vaulted ceilings, mosaic pavements, columns of various kinds, statues, and bas-reliefs.

(1473–74.) Nardo Corbolini and Leonardo Guidoni, goldsmiths, undertake the restoration of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, in the "Campus Lateranensis." Sixtus IV describes this statue as "vetustate quassatam et collabentem cum assessore." [1] The price of six hundred and seventy gold florins was to be obtained from the "jewels" of the Holy Roman See. This restoration, by placing that famous group in better evidence, made a great impression on contemporary artists. Vasari says that the sight of it fascinated Andrea Verrocchio so deeply that he gave up his profession as a goldsmith and became a brass-founder. Already, before Verrocchio, the group had been reproduced on a smaller scale by Antonio Averlino (Filarete) whose delicate masterpiece is now preserved in the Dresden Museum.[2]

[1] The restoration was really begun under Paul II in 1478, Cristoforo de Geremiis being the artist entrusted with the work.

[2] The oldest description of the Lateran collection of antique bronzes (including the equestrian group, the colossal head, and the hand with the

(Ca. 1569.) The great religious warfare which revolutionized half Europe at the time of Pius V (Michele Ghislieri, 1566–72), is brought back to our memory by the twenty-three banners, occasionally exhibited in the transept of Clement VIII, which were captured from the Huguenots by the Pope's auxiliary forces. A despatch sent from Rome to the ducal Chancellery at Urbino says: "To-day [January 7, 1570] the twenty-seven flags won in France by the Italian contingent, have been removed with due solemnity to Saint John the Lateran. The pageant was headed by the Commander-in-Chief, Paolo Sforza, and by other dignitaries of the Curia, with an escort of the Pope's Swiss Guards. The said banners were dragged through the mud and mire of the unpaved streets, out of contempt for the French heretics." An inscription commemorating these events, set into the wall of the corridor behind the apse, says: "Pius V, Supreme Pontiff, has hung in this Queen of Churches the flags conquered from the rebels against Charles IX, and against the Catholic faith, by Paolo Sforza, Count of Santafiora." Strange how history repeats itself! Substitute the name of General Albricci for that of Count Sforza, and the name of the "Chemins des Dames" for that of the battlefield of Montcontour, and we have a perfect repetition of like events, of Italian victorious help, but little appreciated by its beneficiaries.

(1585–90.) The pontificate of Sixtus V marks the worst period in the history of the Patriarchium, which was demolished wholesale to make room for a new, clumsy structure designed by the Pope's favourite

globe) is to be found in Nikolaus Muffel's *Beschreibung*, written A.D. 1452. Giovanni Ruccellai, in his *Diary* of A.D. 1450 adds to the collection the Wolf and the "Cavaspino."

HEEMSKERK'S VIEW OF THE CAMPUS LATERANENSIS

architect, Domenico Fontana. The reader who wishes full particulars on this subject will find a complete account in Volume IV of my "Storia degli scavi di Roma" (pp. 121–75). To remain within the scheme and the limits of this chapter, I shall mention but three events: the finding of a treasure trove; the destruction of the oratory of the Holy Cross; and the raising of the obelisk of Thothmes IV in the newly laid-out Piazza di San Giovanni.

The best authorities concerning the first event are Campana, "Storie del Mondo," VII, p. 244, and Cardinal di Santaseverina, "Autobiography," p. 188. The latter says: "In the year 1587 Pope Sixtus asked me to prepare a Bull which he wished to issue on the subject of certain gold medals found at San Giovanni Laterano with the effigy of many Emperors, chiefly of Justinian, heretic, 'lapse and relapse,' of Heraclius, monotheist and monophysite, and of Phocas the tyrant. I suggested the calling in of a committee of eminent men such as Bellarmino, Fulvio Orsini, Silvio Antoniano, Baronio, etc., but His Holiness answered that he had no intention of canonizing those Emperors, only of giving them due praise for whatever good actions they had practised in life. And, as I insisted upon pointing out the fact that no Emperor after Constantine the Great had contributed to the welfare of the Lateran, save Valentinian III, the Pope said he did not believe that such was the case."

Ciampini [1] adds other details: "In demolishing some old vacillating walls of the Patriarchium, many coins of the purest gold were found scattered over a considerable area, which coins were marked on one side with the symbol of the cross or of a personage holding a cross; on the other with fourteen different effigies of Empe-

[1] *De sacris ædificiis*, p. 9.

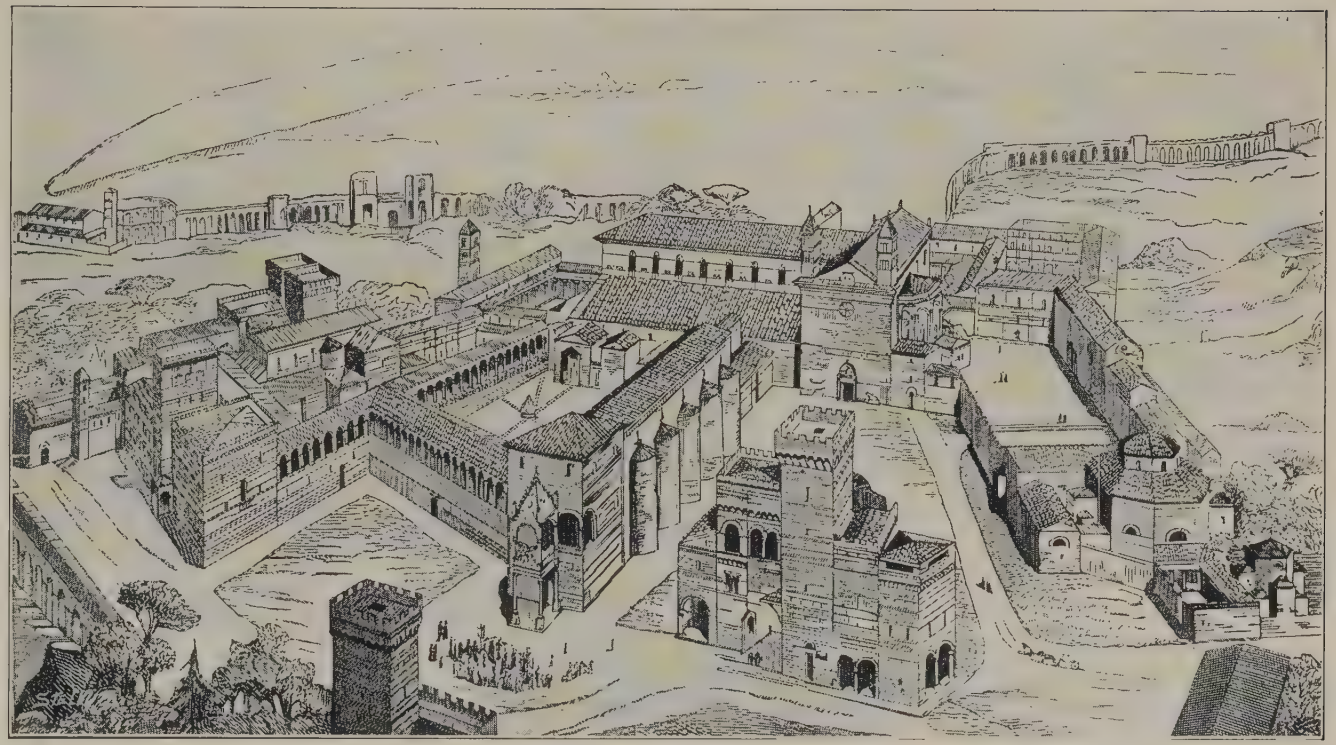
rors, including Theodosius, Marcianus, Leo, Justinus, Mauritius, Phocas, etc., all benefactors of the old church."

A paragraph inserted in the "Avvisi di Roma" of June 27, 1587, announces the gift made by Pope Sixtus to each of the Cardinals who had ridden with him to the Lateran, of a gold coin with the effigy of Helena, mother of Constantine. They had been found (one hundred and twenty-five in number) locked in an iron strong-box among the ruins of the Patriarchium. Their value was stated as thirteen giulii each (one dollar and thirty cents).

I believe these coins to be the only ones found in Roman excavations to which was granted the privilege of conferring holy indulgences. Torrigio[1] says: "Sixtus V has granted the value of a holy relic to the gold coins found in the foundations of the new Lateran Palace, and has given them to his favourite cardinals and prelates, who in their turn have offered them to their favourite churches, such as Saint Catherine's near Saint Peter's, Santo Spirito in Sassia, Sant' Agata in Trastevere, and even the Vatican, where the coin was set in a reliquary containing a splinter of the gallows of Mount Calvary."

The destruction of the Oratory of the Holy Cross at the Lateran counts among the most atrocious vandalisms marking the pontificate of Sixtus. No one can read the accounts of Pompeo Ugonio and Giacomo Grimaldi without feeling the deepest regret. This "Oratorium Sanctæ Crucis" was in the shape of a Greek cross, with a small atrium in front, surrounded on three sides by columns, in the style of a classic nymphæum. There were three fountains or basins of rare marble, one in the centre of the vestibule, the others at the sides. The three doors

[1] *Sette chiese*, p. 246.



THE PIAZZA DI SAN GIOVANNI

were cast in bronze and inlaid with silver. Exquisite mosaics adorned the ceiling, and the walls were inlaid with the finest marble veneering, of the kind called *opus sectile*. The destruction of this gem of early Christian architecture and decorative art is recorded by Ugonio with the following words: "This most splendid oratory was torn down amidst the groans and lamentations of the city, and its disappearance has left a sense of loss in the hearts of all."

As an instance of the perfect indifference with which the relics of the past, whether pagan or Christian, were treated by the workmen of Sixtus V, I relate the following anecdote. On the 2d day of April, 1613, Giacomo Grimaldi saw lying on the floor of a stonecutter's workshop, near the church of San Andrea delle Fratte, a piece of a marble architrave on which were engraved the words: AD HONOREM ARCANGELORVM LEO TERTIVS PAPA. It was the only surviving relic of the celebrated Oratory of the Archangels, mentioned by the "Liber Pontificalis" in the biography of that Pope, which fell under the pickaxe of the "destroyers" in 1613. Cardinal Rasponi had a like experience with the inscription of the Oratory of Saint Peter, an interesting structure of the time of Gregory II (715–31), fragments of which he saw lying on the floor.

The necessity for students to keep their eyes open and their memory always active was again made evident in 1854, when de Rossi found a piece of an epistyle inscribed with the letters . . . NCTA·PER A . . . among the rubbish dug from the foundations of the new Passionist Convent at the Scala Santa. It was not difficult for him to discover at once that those few letters belonged to the epistyle of the portico raised in front of the

Basilica by Nicholas IV, and that they were to be integrated as follows; *Hic Salvatoris celestia regna datoris nomine sanxerunt cu*NCTA·PER A*cta fuerunt.*[1]

The obelisk of the Lateran, the largest now extant, was found broken in three pieces in the month of February, 1587, and reërected by Domenico Fontana in the following year. It was brought from Heliopolis to Alexandria by Constantine, and was transferred to Rome in the year 357 by his son Constantius, on a vessel or raft manned by three hundred oarsmen, which landed at the Vicus Alexandri, three miles below Rome. The hieroglyphic inscription commemorates King Thothmes III of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the Moeris of the Greek. It was lying, when discovered by Fontana, along the spina of the Circus Maximus, in a bed of mud and mire, from which it was set free by the wonderful mechanical skill of Sixtus' favourite engineer. In order to set the three pieces together, he was obliged to cut off a section of the lower part: notwithstanding which diminution the obelisk remains the loftiest in Rome, and in the world. The height of the shaft, without the ornaments and base, measures 105 feet 6 inches, and its weight has been estimated at 455 tons.[2]

I have just stated this to be the loftiest monolith in the world; but, according to information received at Assouan, while I am writing these lines, its place of preëminence ought to be transferred to another obelisk lying about half a mile south of Assouan, the existence of which has been known for nearly a century without eliciting any special interest. It is still attached to the

[1] Compare de Rossi: *Inscr. Chr.*, vol. II, p. 322, n. 4.

[2] The sides are of unequal breadth at the base: two measure 9 feet 8½ inches, two only 9 feet. One of the sides is slightly convex.

parent rock, apparently because it was found that the tremendous strain due to the great length and the relatively slender width of the obelisk could not be

THE LARGEST OBELISK IN THE WORLD
Lately discovered at Assouan

borne. The monolith is 133 feet long, 14 feet wide at the base, and 8 feet at the pyramidion. Its weight, when removed, would have been 1168 tons, or three times the weight of the largest obelisk at Karnak. Professor Flinders Petrie believes that the reason why the ancients gave up detaching this gigantic block from its quarry-bed, was the discovery of flaws in the granite, which

would have caused its fracture in three or four pieces.

Fontana's wonderful reconstruction of Thothmes' monolith at the Lateran was attended with loss of lives. In the "Avvisi" of April 18, 1587, it is recorded: "Yesterday the fall of a beam in the Sala del Concilio killed three workmen and two more were maimed by the breaking of one of the props of the Guglia."

(1593–1600.) The principal source of information concerning the transept built by Pope Clement VIII, Aldobrandini (hence called the "Nave Clementina"), is to be found in the "Libro dei Conti del Signor Giovanni Vaccarone per la fabbrica di S. Giovanni in Laterano," now kept in the State Archives. This document is equally valuable for the history of Art and for the history of archæological investigation in the last decade of the sixteenth century. Pope Clement chose his advisers and collaborators among the very best of the age: Silla Longhi and Francesco Landini for ornamental work; the Cavaliere d' Arpino and Cristoforo delle Pomarancie as painters; Pietro Paolo Olivieri and Antonio Valsoldo as sculptors; Curzio Vanni, goldsmith; Orazio Censori, brass-founder; Giulio Lanciani, gilder, etc. The whole magnificent work, and the expense thereof, were so skilfully managed by the Pope's banker, Giuseppe Giustiniani, that Clement VIII could see his dream realized with an outlay of only thirty-eight thousand scudi, one twentieth of what it would cost to-day. The ancient edifices, the spoils of which were taken advantage of by the builders of the transept, are too many to be recorded one by one. These men laid their hands even on the triumphal arch of Constantine, as related by Venuti, "Antichità di Roma" (1, 23). "Next in value," he says, "to the bas-reliefs of the arch are the eight fluted

columns of giallo d'oro, one of which was taken away by Clement VIII to make a pair with another already placed under the organ." [1] I have also found the origin of the latter. It had been taken away from the portico of Nicholas IV in front of the church, called "il Portico Vecchio," the gap in the colonnade being filled with an ordinary shaft of grey granite discovered in the farmhouse of Madonna Ginevra di Ceccone Salviati, on the Via Appia Nuova. Ficoroni relates that, besides the column of giallo, Pope Clement laid hands also on a marble head, probably of one of the Dacian prisoners on the attic of the arch. Ficoroni's statement is exact, as proved by the following item in Giustiniani's Book of Accounts: "To Silla Longo sculptor 10 scudi for having restored a marble head found by the arch of Constantine, while the builders of the transept were seeking for classic materials." And it was not the first time that this famous neighbourhood had been put to ransom for the same purpose. In A.D. 1438, while the restoration of the apse was progressing by order of Eugenius IV, a German cartman, Ludwig by name, was kept busy for months transferring to the Lateran the travertine blocks dug within and around the Coliseum. As I said above, the same Pope, at the same time, was threatening with excommunication whoever dared to lay hands on the stones of the amphitheatre!

(1660.) As a conclusion to these fragmentary notes concerning the Lateran, its architecture, its history and vicissitudes, mention must be made of the bronze door at the main entrance of the church from the east side. When the Curia or Senate House, in the Comitium, was

[1] The organ supported by these precious pillars is a masterpiece of Luca di Blasio from Perugia, organist to the Pope. It bears the date A.D. 1599.

Christianized under the invocation of Saint Hadrian, a saint otherwise unknown, the ancient decorations of the hall, the gilt coffers of the vaulted roof, the marble encrustations of the walls, and the bronze door had not yet suffered damage or alteration. They disappeared partly in 1589, partly in 1654 at the hands of Cardinal Agostino Cusano, and of Alfonso Sotomayor. The beautiful folding doors, dating probably from the time of Domitian, were removed to the Lateran by Alexander VII, but as the folds were smaller than the opening of the doorway of the church, a band, ornamented with the typical stars of the Chigi family, was added to the ancient metal work.[1]

[1] For further information on the Lateran Palace and on the Basilica Salvatoris, consult Panvinio: *De ss. Basilica Baptisterio et Patriarchio Later.*, a manuscript work quoted by de Rossi in his superb edition of the *Roman Mosaics;* Duchesne: *Lib. Pont.*, vol. I, p. 192, n. 42; Stevenson: *Scoperte di antichi edificii al Laterano;* Ciampini: *De sacris ædificiis, apud* Constantino Magno: *Constructis;* Rasponi: *De Basilica et Patriarchio Later.*, Rome, 1656; Rohault de Fleury: *Le Latran au moyen âge*, Paris, 1877; Valentini: *La Basilica Later.*, Roma, 1836; Armellini: *Chiese*, p. 97, *et seq.*

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS (HIERUSALEM)

THE tableland at the southern end of the city, into which merge the Cælian and the Esquiline Hills, has been connected since the earliest days of the Kings with military purposes. Here was established the "præsidium contra Gabinos," in a fortified village called "Sucusa"; and here in course of time were quartered the "Peregrini," the "Corporis Custodes," the "Vigiles," the "Frumentarii," and the "Equites Singulares" or Horse Guards. Connected with the barracks were the "Lupanaria," a State institution for the convenience of the garrison, and also the military burial-grounds, flanked by the road to Præneste. As a consequence of this state of things, the old Campus Martius, which had become unavailable on account of the congestion of new Augustan buildings, was abandoned, and a new drilling-field was opened under the name of "*Campus Martialis*," the memory of which has survived to the present day in the little chapel of San Gregorio in *Martio*.

The drilling-ground on the Cælian having thus become an annex to the imperial residence at the Lateran, the imperial estate reached an immense extent, including within its boundaries the Varian Park, the Sessorian Palace, the Amphitheatrum Castrense, the Circus Varianus, the suburban villa "ad duas Lauros," the adjoining cemetery of the Horse Guards, and other military camps and barracks, the ruins of which are now known by the name of "*Centocelle*."

It is not impossible that the arches of Basile,[1] of Dolà-

[1] The classic name of this arch, spanning the Via Merulana, is unknown. Compare my edition of *Frontinus*, p. 152.

bella and Silvanus, were practically entrance gates to the Imperial Headquarters on the Cælian. And, as the main entrance to the Prætorian camp had been transformed into a triumphal arch of Gordianus III, it is highly probable that the main gate of the Cælian was similarly modified. As I have already remarked, apropos of the Papessa Giovanna, there existed face to face with the Basilica of Saint Clement a smaller church dedicated to "San *Pastore*," an unknown name, borrowed, perhaps, from that of a near-by fountain known as the "Lacus *Pastoris*." Now, in a document of June 20, 1011, preserved in the archives of San Gregorio, mention is made of a house in the third ward of the city "in locum qui vocatur sancto *Pastore* sive *arcum Pietatis*." This is not the only arch in Rome connected with the name of the Goddess of Mercy (Pietas) from a popular misinterpretation of the scene represented in its bas-reliefs, namely, the scene of an Emperor riding in triumph while the conquered nation or province was personified by a female figure on her knees, begging for mercy. For this reason the arch in front of the Pantheon,[1] seen and described by Dante,[2] was called Arco della *Pietà;* a hospital close by, the Ospedale della *Pietà;* a church still existing, the Madonna della *Pietà;* and the Pawn-Office, Monte della *Pietà*. We can therefore deduce from these facts that the military city on the Cælian was entered by the San Pastore road, through an arch ornamented with the customary representations of a conquered nation.

The partiality shown by the Emperors for their Lateran residence lasted until the Constantinian age, when its beautiful aspect was marred by the erection of

[1] Compare *Ancient Rome*, p. 157. [2] *Purgatorio*, x, 73–93.

the Basilica of the Saviour, described in the preceding chapter. It was at this juncture that the section of the estate called *Sessorium* came into evidence, having been assigned by Constantine to his mother, the Empress Helena, as her town residence, just as the villa at *duas Lauros* was given her as a suburban pleasure estate.

The Sessorium (a name which defies interpretation) was originally the "casino" of the park laid out by Sextius Varius Marcellus, father of the Emperor Heliogabalus, who joined it with the great park system of the eastern side of the City. Here Heliogabalus retired to conspire against the life of his cousin, Severus Alexander, and here the Prætorians, eager to take revenge for the attempted assassination of their cherished young Prince, found him starting a chariot race in the Circus. And when the park was cut in two by the walls of Aurelian, about A.D. 272, the outside section was probably abandoned to its fate: the one "intra muros" continued to be Crown property under the name of *Horti Sessoriani* until the end of the third century, when it was taken possession of by the first Christian Empress for her official residence.

Flavia Julia Helena Augusta, first wife of Constantius Chlorus and mother of Constantine, was born about A.D. 248 and died about 327. Little is known of her life beyond the two facts that, at the age of nearly eighty years, she undertook a remarkable pilgrimage to Palestine, where her memory was perpetuated by many sanctuaries erected or embellished by her devout generosity. Eusebius speaks strongly of her youthful spirits when travelling in the Holy Land, notwithstanding her great age. She is said to have been born at Drepanum in Bithynia, which Constantine surnamed, in her honour, "Helenopolis." The story that she was

the daughter of Coël, a British chieftain, and born at York, or Colchester, or London, is merely part of the legend which arose at a later age connecting the career of her famous son with the Roman rule over Britain. She was doubtless of humble origin, the daughter of an innkeeper, and of a mother "vilissima." Constantius, at the time when he first met her, was a young officer of good family and position, and he appears to have at first united her to himself by the looser tie of the "conjugium inæquale," which was then customary between persons of such different stations in life, and which did not necessarily imply the least suspicion of immorality.

Her son was born about A.D. 274 at Naissus (Nish, Serbia), on which occasion it is probable that Constantius advanced her to the position of a lawful wife. Eighteen years later, in A.D. 292, when Constantius was raised to the rank of Cæsar, Helena was divorced as a matter of policy, in order that the new Prince might marry Theodora, stepdaughter of the Emperor Maximianus. The looseness of marriage ties among the Romans may be considered as a sufficient explanation of these acts, without supposing any offence or misconduct on the part of the wife, or any special heartlessness on that of the husband.[1]

We know nothing of her life during the remainder of her husband's reign; but when Constantine became Emperor in 306, he recalled his mother to the Court, paid her great honours, caused her to be proclaimed "Augusta" by the Army and the Senate, assigned to her an almost unlimited dowry, gave her the right to set free prisoners and criminals, and to recall persons in exile, and, lastly, made over to her the magnificent Sessorian

[1] See Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, vol. II, p. 881.

SALLUSTIA BARBIA ORBIANA AS VENUS FELIX

Palace. To understand the value of this last gift, and to explain the reason why Helena preferred its leafy seclusion to the noisy glamour of the Palatine (as in modern times the Popes have shown partiality for the retreat of the Quirinal in preference to the splendours of the Vatican), we must remember that the Sessorium, while being actually outside the city, was so convenient, so beautiful, so grandiose, and so comfortable that nowhere else in Rome could the like of it be found as a residence for the dowager Empress, a very old and very devout convert to the Christian faith. The property covered the space of several hundred acres, if we judge by the distance of over a mile which separates the Thermæ Helenianæ from Helena's mausoleum ad Duas Lauros. No wonder that the district should be full of associations of her residence and of her prodigality in improving the estate. Here were found the pedestals of statues raised to her by Fulvius Maximianus, a dignitary in the Constantinian *entourage*, and by Pistus, Keeper of the Privy Purse; here also, in the vineyard of Girolamo Muziano, the painter, was found a bust alleged to represent her likeness. In fact, this whole region *ad Spem Veterem* was a repository of works of Art. Pirro Ligorio relates how Monsignor Gualtieri, Bishop of Viterbo, while searching in the garden of the Sessorium, found statues of the Empress Helena, clothed in a mantle and a stole reaching to the feet, as well as statues of Constantine and their children in military attire. The same Ligorio mentions also a statuette of Venus, cut in rock crystal, as found in the same grounds. The statue of Sallustia Barbia Orbiana, wife of Severus Alexander, now in the Cortile di Belvedere of the Vatican Museum, is said to have been unearthed at the time of Julius II near the so-called "Minerva Medica." The Marchese Cam-

pana tried his chances in 1855, but found only the imperial wine-cellars, with many rows of amphoræ still standing on the sand floor. I am sorry to acknowledge that my efforts to trace the Constantinian statues have failed, because it would have been a very interesting experience to study the countenance of the noble Empress in a contemporary portrait. The only ones we possess, namely, her effigies on medals and coins, are rather conventional, with the exception of the one, evidently characteristic and taken from life (Cohen: "Monnaies," vol. VII, p. 96), reproduced in Gnecchi's magnificent "Corpus," II, cxxviii.[1]

This want of a sure and satisfactory portrait of the Empress makes all the more important the discovery of a bronze head, representing most probably her full-sized likeness. The discovery, ignored by the majority of students, came to my knowledge in 1914 under the following unusual circumstances.

On May 2, 1879, while Giuseppe Martinucci, a citizen of Chiavenna, was planting some shrubs in his garden, which had once belonged to the Counts of Salis-Soglio, the bronze head was discovered in absolutely modern soil, at a depth of only 1.50 metres. A question having arisen as to the ownership of the head, Professors Roberto Paribeni, Federico Hermanin, and myself were asked by the Court, before which the case was tried, to inquire into the find and to report as to its authenticity, age, and iconographic value. The results of our investigations were made known in a profusely illustrated memoir printed in "Ausonia," vol. IX (1914), p. 123, from which I borrow the following information.

Ludovico Castelvetro, the wealthy and erudite his-

[1] The superb and perhaps unique collection of Roman coins put together by Gnecchi has just become national property; value, two million lire.

THE BRONZE HEAD OF CHIAVENNA

torian from Modena, where he was born in 1507, having incurred the wrath of the Inquisition in November, 1560, on account of his reformist tendencies and his adherence to Melanchthon's doctrines, wandered for many weary months through Germany, France, and Switzerland, and finally settled at Chiavenna, a city then pertaining to the Confederacy of the Grisons, and therefore outside any jurisdiction of the dreaded Court. Here he lived in comparative peace as a guest of Count Rudolf de Salis, a gallant officer of the court of Maximilian II, and here he died on February 21, 1571, deeply regretted by his friend, who raised a monument to his memory in the same garden in which the bronze head has been lately discovered. Now, it was the fashion among the erudites of the sixteenth century to collect not only books and manuscripts, but antiques of various kinds, bronzes, coins, gems, statues, and busts. To quote one instance: Hannibal Caro, the fiercest enemy of Castelvetro, owned a private museum which was sold in 1576 to the municipality of Rome. And while we must not imagine that a wanderer on the face of the earth, like Castelvetro, carried about in his anxious peregrinations marbles and bronzes, we must remember that Rudolf de Salis, the friend and protector of the wanderer, was himself a collector of antiques, including inscriptions of historical value.[1] Leaving aside, therefore, the question of the origin of the bronze portrait, which, after all, may have been given to the owner of the garden as a token of gratitude; and leaving aside likewise the question of its authenticity (which is indisputable), there remains to determine whose likeness it may represent. Without entering into details which would lengthen this discussion to excess, the conclusions at which my

[1] Compare Gruterus: *Inscr.*, p. 1157; *Corpus*, v, 5243.

colleagues and myself arrived may be summarized as follows.

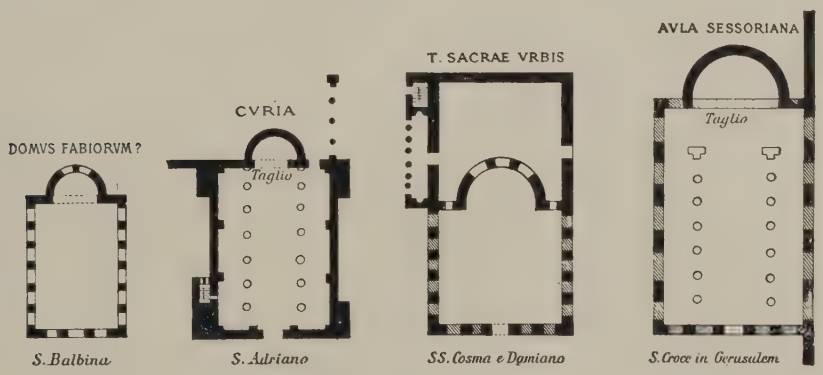
The bronze was cast from a waxen imprint (technically, from a *mask*) of a dead lady of rank so advanced in years that she had no hair left, save a few locks above the ears. (See illustration on p. 221.) To conceal this state of baldness she wore a net of conical shape with the ends coiled on the top of her head. By putting the thumbs over the eyes of the mask, the expression, or rather the want of expression, especially about the compressed lips, becomes that of a dead person. It is unnecessary to remark that the eyes of the deceased, closed when the waxen imprint was taken, were opened by the artist who cast the bronze head.

By comparing its profile and headdress with the effigy in Helena's medallion referred to above, I have come to the conclusion that we have two representations of the same subject. At any rate, whether our identification be right or not, the illustrations here appended cannot fail to interest the reader.

The place and date of Helena's death are uncertain, but we have no doubt that the noble mausoleum, now called *Tor Pignattara*, at the second milestone of the Via Labicana, has given shelter to her remains, as certified by the presence there of an imperial porphyry sarcophagus, now in the Sala della Croce Greca, which forms the pair with the one of Constantina, granddaughter of the dowager lady, now in the same hall. There is a tradition — hardly worth repeating — that in the year 480 her body was stolen from the Torre Pignattara Mausoleum by a monk, Theogisus by name, and transferred to the city of Hautevilliers in the diocese of Rheims.

The earliest mention of a church or chapel named

Hierusalem occurs in the biography of Pope Sylvester (A.D. 314–35): "Constantine opened a basilica in the Sessorian Palace, where, in a golden reliquary, are kept pieces of the Holy Cross, and named it *Hierusalem;* he also made a present to the new sanctuary of the Horti Variani (omnia agrorum iuxta palatium ecclesiæ) and of many other farms of the Campagna, including Pratica-di-Mare (Lavinium) and Cisterna (ad Sponsas)." The basilica is called in various ways in subsequent documents: "Hierusalem basilica Sessoriani palatii," in the protocols of the Council of Rome, A.D. 501; "basilica Heleniana" in other documents of the sixth century, etc. The hall of the Palace selected for the veneration of the Cross was probably the conservatory or greenhouse, resembling very closely in shape and dimensions the Templum Sacræ Urbis, turned by Felix IV into a church of Saints Cosmas and Damianus, and, to a greater extent, the greenhouse of the palace of the Fabii, now the church of Santa Balbina.



As shown by the comparison of the ground-plan of these halls, they seem to have been designed by the same architect and on the same pattern, with the same double line and number of arched windows, large enough to give

air and light to the conservatory within. Even their wall decorations in "Florentine" mosaic (opus sectile marmoreum), composed of crusts of onyx, porphyry, mother-of-pearl, serpentine, and other precious stones, were identical, in three cases at least.[1]

Constantine left the hall as it was: he only closed the lower arches opening on the garden and added an apse at the east end. The columns, by which the hall was subsequently divided into nave and aisles (now encased and walled in the thickness of clumsy brick pillars), are an addition of Pope Gregory II (715–31). Benedict XIV in 1744, with the assistance of Passalacqua and Gregorini, reduced the glorious monument to its present grotesque form. This work, which Milizia justly denounces as "*nefando*," was done at the expense of another hall of basilical type, known in ordinary guidebooks by the name of "Tempio di Venere e Cupido." [2]

The Sessorium continued to be State property at least until the beginning of the sixth century. An inscription in Santa Croce, under the mosaic of the apse, now lost, but certified by Pietro Sabino, declared that Valentinian III, his mother Galla Placidia, and his wife Honoria, had fulfilled a vow by contributing to the beauty of the Hierusalem. The vow was probably made in 424, under the stress of a terrible storm, which endangered the imperial galley, while crossing the Adriatic on its way from Constantinople to Ravenna. A contemporary

[1] Benedict XIV is responsible for the destruction of the tarsia work in the attic of the Pantheon. The other specimens were to be found in the Curia and in the Templum Sacræ Urbis.

[2] This basilica, which stood almost intact in the second half of the sixteenth century, with its colonnade of red granite, its portico and vestibule, was destroyed by Benedict's acolytes for the sake of a few cartloads of bricks. The apse alone has escaped destruction. It can be seen in the garden adjoining the barracks of the First Grenadiers at Santa Croce.

inscription in the church of Saint John the Evangelist in the latter city expressly says: "LIBERATIONIS A PERICVLO MARIS VOTVM SOLVERVNT."

I may also quote an incident in the life of King Theodoric who, during his visit to Rome, A.D. 500, caused one of his officers, Theodoro, son of Basilius, and follower of Odin, to be executed "in palatio quod appellatur Sessorium." Strange fate, indeed, that the most bright, sunny, park-like section of the "Exquiliæ salubres" [1] should have been set apart for capital punishments. Mention has already been made of Platius Lateranus at the time of Nero, when the unfortunate patrician was dragged "to the field set apart for the crucifixion of slaves" (locus servilibus peonis sepositus), and beheaded by Statius the Prætorian. The "field" must have been a well-defined space, marked by terminal stones, with gallows and crosses ready to receive their victims, just as there were on the Capitol, at a place called *Le Forche*, famous in the history of mediæval feuds. Tacitus describes the execution of P. Marcius "extra portam Esquilinam" [2] and the profanation of Galba's corpse in the enclosure of the Sessorium. When the same enclosure of death was abandoned, after the ruin and depopulation of the Esquiline, offenders underwent capital punishment, first in the Campus Lateranensis, later on the Capitol, and at the Ponte Sant' Angelo; and, in modern times, at the Piazza de' Cerchi, until the law was passed for the abolition of the capital penalty.

The main entrance to the basilica, renewed in 1475, at the expense of Cardinal Domenico Capranica, was framed by richly carved marble posts and lintel, with folding doors of cypress wood, inlaid with wreaths and

[1] "Nunc licet *Exquiliis* habitare *salubribus*." (Horace: *Satires*, I, 8, 14.)
[2] Tacitus: *Ann.*, II, 32; *Histor.*, I, 49; Suetonius: *Galba*, 20, etc.

delicate tracings, by an artist from Tivoli named Alexander. The doors were probably destroyed by the "restorers" of Benedict XIV, whose excellent soul possessed no artistic feeling whatever. To him also must be brought home the disappearance of the Ciborium, erected in 1145 by Cardinal Ubaldo Caccianemico, a relative of Lucius II, from the designs and with the help of Giovanni-Angelo and Sasso, the precursors of the Roman School of Marmorarii.

The Thermæ Helenianæ and the reservoir which fed them can still be seen in what was once the Vigna Conti, and what are now the shabby-genteel headquarters of the railway men. The monumental inscription of the Baths, now in the Sala della Croce Greca at the Vatican, describes how "Helena the venerable . . . thermas incendio destructas restituit." The inscription was probably discovered in the excavations of Lelio Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, described by Bartoli,[1] in the course of which five "bellissime" statues were found in an underground hall, with fragments of statuary and marbles of every description. It seems that, after the fall of the Empire, one or more rooms of these Baths were adapted to Christian worship. Flaminio Vacca, the artist dear to Sixtus V, saw images of saints painted on their walls, and Cherubino Alberti, another contemporary, adds that Saint Helena was said to have been buried in one of them. I have myself seen traces of paintings in some extensive apartments, deep underground, in front of the modern church, which have never been properly explored.

Connected with these finds of painted crypts is a quite recent discovery, made at the junction of the Viale Manzoni with the Viale di Porta Maggiore, in the foundations

[1] *Memorie*, ed. Fea., n. 37.

CRIMINALS UNDERGOING VARIOUS PUNISHMENTS IN THE CAMPUS LATERANENSIS
From a drawing of a fresco formerly in the Nave Clementina at Saint John's, now lost

of a new public taxi-garage. The discovery has already been discussed and illustrated by Bendinelli, Paribeni, Marucchi, Cumont, and Wilpert. Their opinions differ as to the religious tendencies of the builders of these wonderful subterranean halls. Bendinelli leaves it an open question, but Paribeni fully believes them to be the earliest and best examples of Christian Art in Rome. In fact, he does not hesitate to attribute to them "un posto di *assoluto primato* nella storia dell' arte cristiana." The crypts themselves baffle description: there is such a mixture of halls, stairs, recesses, galleries, vaults, and catacombs that any attempt to convey to the reader a clear idea of what they are like would be utterly futile without an abundant apparatus of plans and drawings. Originally there were only two funeral chambers, built in the second half of the second century by an Aurelius Felicissimus for himself and other co-freedmen, whom he calls brothers (*fratres*), not in the ordinary sense of the word, but in that of a religious brotherhood. One of the occupants, Aurelia Prima, is called "virgin," another proof of the spirit of Christianity which pervades the place. And in the whole set of frescoes — which make them unique in the history of Art — we detect the purpose of representing scenes from the Gospels in a disguised form: that is to say, without running the risk of detection by pagan visitors. Thus we see represented four times the figure of the Good Shepherd, which might have been identified with Orpheus; the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, with the image of the Saviour disguised as a shepherd among his flock, seated on a pinnacle or rock with an open book on his knees; the life-size figures of the Twelve Apostles, "di nobilissima fattura" (of excellent workmanship); another representation of the Twelve and other groups which might

represent Christ preaching in Solomon's temple; the woman with the issue of blood, and the ass ridden by the Saviour in his last visit to Jerusalem. The gems of the collection are without doubt the two marvellous heads which, according to Paribeni's theory, represent the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul. The excellent photographic reproductions which, thanks to Paribeni's kindness, I am able to lay before the reader, make needless a detailed description of them.

On April 23, 1917, a merciful Providence granted us, veteran explorers of the sacred soil of Rome, a welcome respite from the gloomy thoughts of the European war, then raging at its height.

The embankment of the Naples express line having given way a few yards outside the Porta Maggiore, the existence of what was described as an enchanted palace was revealed to us from a depth of forty feet. As soon as the descent into the bowels of the earth had been made safe, the excitement of the moment gave place to a more sedate valuation of facts — facts which were enough, however, to justify any flight of imagination. A lodge for secret meetings had been found, with the walls panelled in bold cream-coloured reliefs, the pavement inlaid with chiaroscuro mosaics, and the vaulted ceiling moulded in painted stucco. Had we been the first explorers to enter this underground sanctuary, the find would have proved, perhaps, the most valuable made in Rome in the half-century of my personal experience; but, alas! at an unknown date, somebody had robbed the crypt of all its contents, whether of marble or bronze, leaving us to unravel the problem without any tangible proofs.

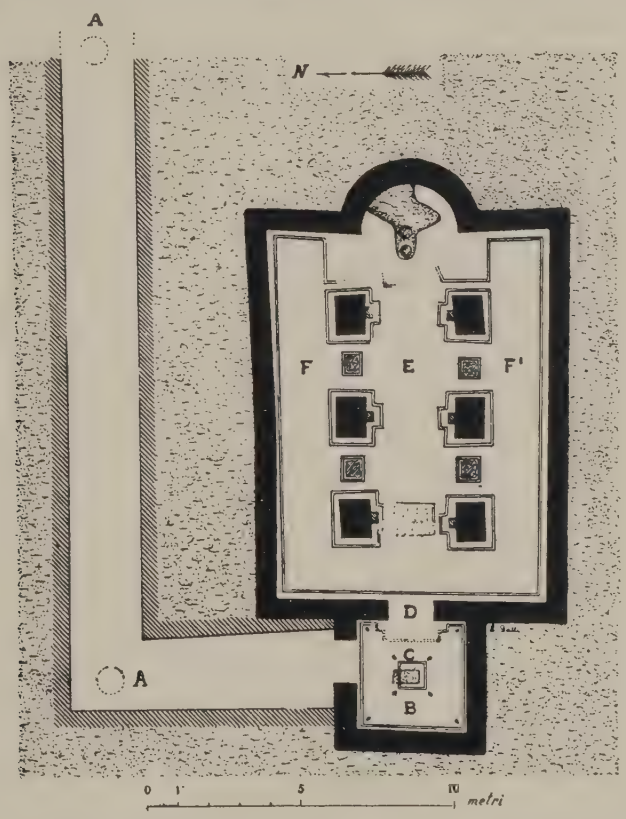
As shown in the plan given on page 237, the lodge com-

NEWLY DISCOVERED FRESCOES SUPPOSED TO

From the crypts on

REPRESENT THE APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL
the Viale Manzoni

prises a corridor descending with a steep gradient from the level of the ground to a depth of forty feet, and furnished with wells for light and ventilation; a vestibule



PLAN OF SECRET LODGE FOUND UNDER A RAILWAY EMBANKMENT OUTSIDE THE PORTA MAGGIORE

with a skylight, and a hall of basilical type, with apse, nave, and aisles where the congregation held its meetings, and where ceremonies of initiation were performed. As I have just said, the crypt is covered from one end to the other with exquisite bas-reliefs representing the most disconnected scenes, the relation of which with any known superstitious or mysterious cult practised in Rome at the

beginning of the second century we have utterly failed to establish. When we consider that among the subjects represented in the stucco panels are the Rape of Helen, jugglers and conjurers, Sappho leaping from the Leucadian rock,[1] pigmies, the Rape of Ganymede, foot-races, the flaying of Marsyas, Mænads, Victories, Cupids, school-teachers, panthers, and scores of other incongruous figures or groups, we find it impossible to establish a *fil conducteur* among so many varieties. And we cannot overlook the fact that the place of honour, in the front of the apse, is given to a figure of Victory, while other representations of the same goddess are scattered all over the crypt. The secret of the place, whatever that may be, and the purpose of the occult worship of the members of the lodge will never be known, because further exploration of the site is made impossible by the four express-railway lines which run on the top of the embankment. The position is certainly unfortunate, but in some cases, like the present one, archæological research has to give way to the exigencies of modern requirements. Such has been the case with the wonderful mosaic discovered some years ago under the Naples line, near the church of Santa Bibiana on the Esquiline. For fear of accidents or disasters we were able to cut away only half of the scene representing the various dodges used to capture wild beasts for the amphitheatre, in the torrid deserts of Nubia, as well as among the icy crags of the Carpathians.

In studying the topography of this district, we must

[1] Archæologists differ as to the interpretation of this complex subject, which occupies the concavity of the apse. The latest and most convincing contribution to the study of this singular scene has been supplied by Professor C. Densmore Curtis, of the American Academy, Rome, in *Atti della pontif. Accademia Romana d' Arch.* (1922), p. 311, pl. VI.

THE RAPE OF GANYMEDE

A stucco relief of the underground basilica by the Porta Maggiore

bear in mind that the Lateran and the Sessorium were originally separated by a hill named *Monte Cipollaro*, from its orchards of onions and garlic (Ital. *cipolle*) which were eaten on Saint John's Day, June 24th. The hill was cut away and levelled by Benedict XIV in the year 1741, when the following objects were brought to light: the Boy struggling with the Goose (see illustration, p. 247), probably after Boëthos, now in the Capitoline Museum; a head of Caracalla; another resembling Carneades; and a column of bianco-nero.

The mention of the preëminence given to onions and garlic in the popular festival of June 24th deserves a few words of explanation. The gathering held on that date in the field between the Lateran and Santa Croce is one of the most striking examples of the survival of classic habits through the lapse of centuries; or, rather, of the transformation of pagan rites into Christian institutions, tolerated, or, at least, not openly condemned, by the Church authorities.

As a matter of fact, the custom of keeping the night of June 24th as a night of revelry dates from immemorial times, probably from the time of King Servius Tullius! The scene of the gathering was not the Campus Lateranensis, as it is now, but the enclosure of a temple dedicated to *Fors Fortuna*, which stood on the right bank of the Tiber about four miles below the city.

Fors Fortuna stands apart, and has a place of its own in the group of co-deities (TYXAI) which had taken possession of the Roman Olympus under the denominations of Primigenia, Equestris, Obsequens, Dubia, Virilis, Muliebris, Redux, Panthea, etc. It is difficult to explain correctly the meaning of the prefix *Fors;* but it relates in a certain sense to the *uncertainty* of Fate. The deity, whoever she was, seems to have had two temples;

one of which was certainly located near the grove of the Arvalians on the Via Campana, because I have myself seen and described in the "Bollettino Archeologico" (1884, p. 27), its scattered remains. Here the gathering of the lowest classes of the population of Rome took place on June 24th, when slaves, artisans, and men without any profession (*qui sine arte aliqua vivunt*), either walked on the right bank of the river, along the tow-path, or floated down in barges shining with Venetian lanterns and resounding with coarse songs. Here the crowd passed long hours in drinking, revelling, and rioting. This pagan custom, to which we still adhere, was taken up by the Christian crowds who laboured under the delusion that the pungent odour of garlic and onions keeps away evil spirits and witchcraft.[1]

No other church in Rome has changed its monastic attendants and its officiating clergy so often as this one of Sante Croce. Leo IX, in 1050, put it under the care of Abbot Ritcher of the Benedictines; Alexander II, in 1070, gave it to the canons of San Frediano di Lucca; Urban V, in 1365, gave it to the Carthusians; Pius IV, in 1561, gave it to the Cistercians, who are still (nominally) in possession of the church. Strange, indeed, is the connection between it and the Baths of Diocletian, the transformation of which baths into a certosa having been contemplated as far back as the eleventh century by Saints Bruno and Gavin, who solicited their concession from Pope Urban II. In the year 1350, Napoleone Orsini, Count of Manopello, took up the scheme again on

[1] No such evil-smelling plants were offered to Fors Fortuna. *Inscrip. Corpus*, I, 978, mentions the oblation of wreaths of violets and roses made to the goddess by the Corporation of the Butchers of the Twelfth Ward (Piscina Publica). Compare Ernout Alfred: *Recueil de Textes Latins Archaïques*. Paris, 1916.

ONE OF THE BAS-RELIEFS IN THE UNDERGROUND BASILICA BY THE PORTA MAGGIORE

his own account, but was prevented from carrying out the project by his own cousin, Nicholas Orsini, Count of Nola. The reason which induced Pius IV to fulfil the wishes of Saint Bruno and Napoleone Orsini was essentially a hygienic one. The Pope himself declares in his Bull of concession that the monastery of the Holy Cross (Sessorianum) was so impregnated with malarial germs that it was almost impossible to find monks willing to dwell in its enclosure, and to jeopardize their health and their lives, especially during the summer months. Considering, therefore, that the Baths of Diocletian were safe from pernicious fevers, and afforded room enough for the building of a certosa, he entrusted to Michelangelo the care of designing and building the new cloisters and monastic cells. I can vouch, from personal experience, for the accuracy of the statement concerning the raging of malaria at Santa Croce. No explanation has as yet been given for the fact that the site of Santa Croce should be so dangerous, while the surrounding district is perfectly healthy. When, at the beginning of the World War, the monastery was transformed into a military hospital, the complication of cases from inexplicable and mysterious agencies were so many and so alarmingly grave that the place had to be evacuated. Needless to say, the works of sanitation, since undertaken by the military authorities, have been so effective that the monastery is now used as barracks for one of our crack regiments of Grenadiers, without a single case of ague being reported.

Hierusalem contains but one Papal tomb, that of Benedict VII, whose career is described in a metric inscription, set into the wall of the nave on the right of the entrance. In the seventeen verses, of which it is com-

posed, allusion is made to the sacrilegious deeds of the Crescenzi family, and more particularly of Marozia, of Theodora, of Crescenzio de Caballo (Monte Cavallo, Quirinale), and of other usurpers of the Holy See.

I shall have further occasion to mention this ambitious and troublesome Crescenzi clan in the next chapter. It is a remarkable fact, however, that while four hundred and eighty-four inscriptions, funeral as well as monumental, have been catalogued and transcribed by Forcella in Saint John the Lateran, thirty-eight only pertain to Santa Croce. Few as they are, they illustrate the long and interesting series of titular Cardinals, mostly of Spanish extraction, whose works of embellishment can be singled out to the present day. The coat of arms of Cardinal Gonzalvo Mendoza, to begin with, was conspicuous in the carved ceiling of the nave, and in the shrine of the Holy Cross. Above the arch facing the entrance were the words "HIC FVIT TITVLVS SANCTAE CRVCIS" written in letters of gold, in memory of its rediscovery on the last day of January in the year 1492 (the same day on which the news reached Rome of the conquest and recovery of Granada from the Moors by King Ferdinand). To the same titular Cardinal de Mendoza pertain the two long enamelled inscriptions, put up in 1495 on each side of the descent to Saint Helena's chapel; to Cardinal Bernardino Lupo de Carvajal pertains the decoration of the Tribune; to Cardinal Francisco Quiñones the pavement of the presbytery; to Cardinal Francisco Pacheco the Chapel of the Holy Relics. This Spanish predomination in the basilica lasted until its renovation and disfigurement by the good Pope Benedict XIV (1740–58).

Two works of Art are conspicuous in the chapel of

BOY AND GOOSE
In the Capitoline Museum

Saint Helena: the statue of the Empress above the altar, and the mosaic pictures of the ceiling. The statue belongs to that rare class of pagan subjects, turned with more or less skill into figures of saints, and exposed in churches to public worship. Such are: the effigy of Saint Sebastian at Sant' Agnese in Agone, the patchwork of G. B. Maini, a contemporary of Algardi; its torso belongs to a statue of Jupiter, or of a Roman Emperor in a sitting posture, while the head is a good imitation of that of the so-called "Alessandro Morente" in Florence; this piece dates from 1675;—a statuette of Sant' Agnese in her church outside the walls, placed on the high altar at the time of Paul V (1628), the body of which carved in translucent alabaster belongs to an ancient replica of the Figurine from Herculaneum, now at Dresden: the restorations are by Nicholas Cordier;—a bust of Saint Agnes over the door to the Matroneum in the same church, made out of a breast of Diana, and of a head, antique, but not of that goddess.

As regards the figure of the Empress Helena in the crypt of Santa Croce, its body is that of a Juno, most exquisitely modelled by a Greek artist, with a modern head. It is a replica of the Juno Borghese, now in the Jacobsen Gallery at Copenhagen. This patchwork cannot be earlier than 1674, the year in which the art critic Titi saw the niche, where the statue now is, occupied by a superb picture by Rubens: in fact, there were three such paintings by that famous artist, one for each of the three altars of the crypt. These precious works were first removed to the library of the monastery, with the excuse that they were spoiled by dampness; and, at a later period were sold to Russia for five thousand dollars! Fancy such a deal having been allowed by the Pope's Commissioner of Fine Arts! The subjects chosen by

Rubens were the Ecce Homo, the Crucifixion, and Saint Helena holding a cross in one hand and a bunch of nails in the other. The copies were executed by Mariani, the favourite pupil of Pompeo Battoni.

As regards the mosaic of the ceiling, its history is thus reconstructed by Panvinio,[1] with the help of the well-known inscription: "Valentinian III, son of Constantius Cæsar, nephew of Arcadius and Honorius, Emperors, son of Placidia, grandson of Theodosius the Spaniard, brother of Honoria, has adorned this chapel with mosaics (opere vermiculato)." Pompeo Ugonio, who wrote his book "Delle Stationi di Roma" in 1588, adds: "The vaulted ceiling of Saint Helena's chapel is covered with mosaics, among the finest to be seen in Rome, a gift of the Emperor Valentinian, made MC years ago. Bernardino Carvajal, Spanish Cardinal under Pope Alexander VI, 'fornicem ipsum ac figuras musivas ad instar priorum refecit.'" Even if the general design was retained by Carvajal's artists, the details were altered to a singular extent by inserting a group of Helena resting her hand on the shoulder of the Spanish Cardinal.

Another so-called restoration, amounting to reconstruction, was perpetrated in 1603, by the Austrian Archduke, Cardinal Albrecht, son of Maximilian II, who, in the monumental inscription now visible on the left of the altar, acknowledges the mosaics of the vault to have been made *ex novo* by his predecessor Carvajal.

A statement which occurs in these records deserves notice. They mention that the basilica was called Hierusalem because it was built totally or partially on a bed

[1] *De septem urbis ecclesiis*, p. 217; Schrader: *Monum. Ital.*, ed. 1592, p. 128; Ciampini: *De sacris ædificiis*, p. 120; de Correriis: *De Sessorianis reliquiis commentarius* (Rome, 1830), p. 83; Besozzi: *Storia di S. Croce*, chap. VIII, p. 76.

of earth brought over from Jerusalem by the pious mother of Constantine. The statement is repeated in an inscription set into the pavement of the chapel, which pavement is alleged to have been laid over a layer of earth of Mount Calvary, probably stained by the blood of our Saviour. The habit of carrying away from the Holy Land a certain amount of soil, over which were raised temples to the true God, dates from Biblical times, as we may deduce from the story of Naaman, who obtained from the Prophet Elijah two mules laden with earth from the land of Israel, so that he could appeal to the true God from the Holy Country, although stranded in the middle of Syria. The same story is repeated in connection with the Jews of Nardeah in the Kingdom of Persia, who built their synagogue with materials brought over from Jerusalem. The habit was taken up by the Crusaders, who may have brought back a few handfuls of the sacred soil, with the help of the fleet of Amalfi, which seems to have been profitably engaged in this trade for a considerable length of time.

According to a legend of doubtful authenticity, the Basilica Heleniana enjoyed the privilege of giving shelter and inviolability to anybody who claimed protection and safety within its walls and under its roof. Besozzi [1] has seen affixed in the vestibule of the church a long inscription, of which he gives the text, stating the fact that, as in early Roman times an asylum had been instituted by Romulus between the two summits of the Capitoline Hill, and as in course of time the prerogative had been transferred to single places of worship, such as the temple of Cæsar in the Forum, so in Christian times it was granted to Santa Croce, and to the whole Sesso-

[1] *Storia della Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*, p. 64.

rian Palace. I cannot see the reason for stating this fact in a monumental inscription, when we know that every church or monastic enclosure in Christian countries enjoyed the same *diritto di asilo.*

There is a last observation to be made before leaving the Hierusalem. It concerns the antiquity of its roof, which contains an astonishing percentage of classic material. Whether the roof is the same laid out by Helena, when the greenhouse of the palace was turned into an imperial chapel, or whether it dates from a later restoration, it is the best preserved specimen of Roman roofing, having withstood weather and damages for a period of eighteen centuries.[1] My late friend, Monsignore Pietro Crostarosa, old as he was, in 1901 spent week after week on that eerie platform, searching for tiles bearing the mark or the name of the bricklayer. His labours were rewarded by the discovery of one hundred and nineteen specimens of brick stamps, the text of which he published in a memoir, "Inventario dei sigilli impressi sulle tegole del tetto di S. Croce in Gerusalemme in Roma." From Crostarosa's analytical inquiry we gather the following evidence:

In the first place, when the basilica was roofed, the decadence and ruin of the city had already begun, and this enabled the master-mason to lay hands without compunction on buildings of the second and third centuries. In the second place, the roof was repaired toward the middle of the fifth century with tiles made expressly by a Christian bricklayer named KACCIOC (Cassius). Lastly, among the owners of kilns of the last period of activity of the dying city, there was one,

[1] Other specimens of ancient roofs can be found at Santi Cosma e Damiano (templum Sacræ Urbis) at Santa Maria Maggiore (basilica Sixtina), at San Martino ai Monti, San Giorgio in Velebro, Sant' Agnese, Santa Sabina, Sant' Adriano, etc.

Flavius Merobaudes, known more as a poet than as a maker of tiles. This singular stamp bears the number 60 in Crostarosa's catalogue, and number 3702 in Volume XV of the "Corpus Inscriptionum."

CHAPTER VI

THE MINOR CONSTANTINIAN CHURCHES

I. BASILICA OF SAINT AGNES

HISTORIANS and topographers are uncertain whether the Basilica of Saint Agnes "extra muros" was raised by Constantina, daughter of the Emperor and wife of Gallus, or by her sister Constantia, a virgin and a devout princess. We cannot understand why there should be any difference of opinion in the face of the original dedicatory inscription, which perished, it is true, at the time of the restoration of Symmachus (494–514), but of which we have authentic copies. It is an acrostic and contains fourteen hexameters: the fourteen initial letters of the verses giving the formula CONSTANTINA (offert) DEO.

Why should these imperial ladies have conceived such devout admiration for the young maiden Agnes as to make her one of the most celebrated saints in the Christian world, and to place her almost at the same level with Peter, Paul, and Lawrence, as far as the grandeur and beauty of their respective basilicas are concerned? An explanation is to be found in the following passage of the "Liber Pontificalis," written circa A.D. 530: "About this time Constantine built a basilica in honour of the holy martyr Agnes, to comply with the wish of his own daughter; he built also a *baptistery* including the font where she had been received into the church by Pope Sylvester."

There is another testimony to be taken into consideration: that of the "Acta Sanctorum" of the twenty-

THE PORPHYRY SARCOPHAGUS OF CONSTANTIA
Now in the Vatican Museum

first day of January: "Having recovered health at the intercession of Saint Agnes, after a protracted illness, the Princess Constantina solicited her father and brothers to raise a basilica over Saint Agnes' grave, as a token of gratitude; to this was added a *mausoleum* so that the benefactress and the beneficiary might lie side by side."

The reader must have noticed the contradiction between these two texts: one referring to a *baptistery*, the other to a *mausoleum*. Which designation is the right one? It is difficult to give a sure answer. In the first place, we have the evidence of the porphyry coffin exactly similar to the one of Saint Helena, the presence of which in the rotunda [1] since immemorial times compels us to recognize it as a true imperial mausoleum similar in shape to the one at Rome Pignattara, or to those by Saint Peter, which I have described in "Pagan and Christian Rome" (p. 200). But if we have to deal with a tomb of a Christian princess, how can we account for the fact that the sarcophagus, as well as the rotunda in which it was placed, are entirely covered with Bacchic scenes and Bacchic groups, representing winged Cupids gathering or treading out grapes? And how can we explain the presence of vintage scenes in the mosaic decorations of the vault of the mausoleum? Not being able to enter into a discussion, the outcome of which would still be open to doubt and uncertainty, I refer the reader to Florian Iubaru's excellent paper, "La decorazione Bacchica di Santa Costanza," published in "Arte" (1906, p. 457 *seq.*), in which the controversy is exhaustively defined.

It has already been noted apropos of Saint Peter's,

[1] I mean the Rotunda, now called Santa Costanza, adjoining Saint Agnes'.

Saint Paul's, and the Lateran that their builder, Constantine, made free use of whatever classic marbles would answer his new purpose; and that not a column or capital or frieze or marble slab could be found in the colonnades of their nave or aisles, the classic origin of which could not be proved. To the same group of Constantinian patchwork structures belongs our basilica, but with this difference, that its endowment of ancient materials seems to have been limited to statuary and bas-reliefs only. Why so many works of art should have been gathered round the grave of Agnes it is difficult, if not impossible, to state. Perhaps the *Agellus* in which she was laid to rest was part of an imperial garden, rich in products of Græco-Roman chisels. Perhaps a solution may be found by reviewing the discoveries made from the early days of the Renaissance to our own age, within or near the sanctuary. The oldest existing relic recalls to our mind the freedman Claudius Celer, who was one of Nero's chief advisers and architects in the rebuilding of the City after the great conflagration of July, 64. Tacitus says that Celer, and his collaborator Severus, were sufficiently clever and daring to accomplish by artificial means works which would have been impossible to perform by natural means. Celer's mausoleum on the Via Nomentana was demolished at the time of Pope Symmachus (498–514) in order that its marble blocks might be used for the restoration of the Basilica of Saint Agnes. The epitaph, brief but full of dignity, can still be (partially) read on the abacus of a capital lying abandoned near the gate of the garden: "CELERI·NERONIS. AVGVSTI·L*iberto*·A*rchitect*O." The chronicle of more modern excavations begins, as far as I know, with the ninth of January, 1568, when the canons of San Pietro in Vinculis leased to Cardinal Flavio Orsini the

monastery and the adjoining lands, on condition that no attempt to seek for antiques should be made without their formal permission. It seems that on account of the archæological wealth of their property, the canons had suffered constant spoliation from Popes, prelates, and titular Cardinals. Already at the time of Paul II (1464–71) the magnificent porphyry sarcophagus of Constantina, to which allusion has already been made, had been removed to the Piazza di San Marco (now di Venezia). The history of the peregrinations of this monolith is quite remarkable. Violated and robbed of its valuable contents (the Princesses of imperial blood were then buried with all their jewels) at the time of the first barbaric invasions, it was again searched in 1256 when Pope Alexander IV, finding it impossible to celebrate mass on an altar so high and incommodious, transferred to another receptacle the relics believed to be those of Constantia, Attica, and Arthemia, and left the sarcophagus alone.

From August 14, 1467, it remained exposed to injury and mutilation from the populace haunting the Piazza di San Marco, to which it had been removed by Paul II, until 1471, when Sixtus IV, yielding to the outcry of the S.P.Q.R. and of the canons of Saint Agnes', caused it to be taken back to its original place, where it remained in peace until 1788, the date of its removal to the Vatican by order of Pius VI.

Two more incidents in the systematic pillage of this monumental group are recorded by the biographers of Sixtus V and of Clement VIII. The former, bent on acquiring the metal necessary for the casting of the colossal statues of Peter and Paul, to be placed on the top of the columns of Trajan and M. Aurelius, wrenched from their sockets the bronze doors of Saint Agnes', thus

causing so much damage to the venerable building that the City magistrates were called upon to interfere. The doors weighed 6125 pounds.

Clement VIII, Aldobrandini, being engaged in beautifying the family chapel in the church of La Minerva, had authorized his architect, Pietro Paolo Olivieri, to remove from Saint Agnes' the two columns of the nave nearest to the high altar, one of pavonazzetto, the other of portasanta, which were reckoned among the finest in Rome. Abandoned and nearly roofless, so that mass was said only once a week by a fever-stricken monk of San Pietro in Vinculis,[1] the basilica could have been despoiled without the public knowing anything about it. However, the Cardinal Commendatario Alessandro Ottaviano de' Medici, the future Pope Leo XI, having been informed of Olivieri's intentions, purchased at once and presented to the Pope two precious columns, which happened to be for sale in the antiquarian market. Clement VIII gratefully accepted the veiled reproach, embraced the Cardinal, took off the piscatorial ring in which an enormous sapphire was set, and, placing it on the Cardinal's finger, expressed his thanks, not so much for the gift of the columns as for having prevented his taking a share in the spoliation of the church. No such scruples seem to have been entertained by Pope Clement XIV, who, in his determination to make his Museo Clementino one of the richest and best, took away from Santa Costanza the pair of candelabra marked 351–352 in Helbig's Catalogue.

The golden days of Saint Agnes', as far as artistic dis-

[1] Although reduced to such a state of utter desolation, its territorial patrimony was still one of the richest in the Campagna, comprising the farms of Curtis Vetus, of Murus Malus, of Santa Maria in Monasterio, etc. Compare Fidele Pietro in *Mélanges École Française* (1906), p. 167, and *Archivio Storia Patria* (1906), p. 183.

AMPHION AND ZETHOS
Bas-relief on the Palazzo Spada

coveries are concerned, date from the cardinalship of Bernardino Spada Veralli, about which Pietro Bartoli, an eye-witness, says: "During the restoration works of the said Cardinal, more exactly, when the staircase descending to the depth of the church was being built, he found all the statues that are actually preserved in the Palazzo Verospi; the bas-reliefs which form the pride of the Palazzo Spada, and a quantity of sepulchral urns, among which was one in rock crystal, with exquisite intaglios, which the abbot Gigliucci offered as a gift to Cardinal Antonio Barberini." As no archæologist took any particular interest in the find, we lack proper information, except that the Spada reliefs, discovered in 1620, had been employed as building materials in the old flight of steps. Their subjects, illustrated by von Duhn in the "Antike Bildwerke in Rom," are Paris and Eros, Dædalos and Pasiphaë, Death of Opheltes, Amphion and Zethos, Paris and Œnone, the Rape of the Palladium, Wounded Adonis, and Bellerophon watering Pegasus.

As regards the original location of these panels, Helbig contends that "they served as the central ornaments of the wall spaces of a room or colonnade." Whatever the meaning of these words may be, he evidently forgets that there is a parallel case to be found on the Palatine, where, during the excavations of the Duke of Parma, A.D. 1727, another set of panels was found, of which I have given an account in the "Mittheilungen" of 1894, pp. 3–36. It seems that the Palatine reliefs were originally placed in the back wall of the portico of the Danaïds, to fill the spaces between the pairs of pilasters. There were two bas-reliefs alluding to the foundation of Rome, which are now set into the wall of the court of the Mattei Palace. A third, with the myth of Dædalos and Icarus, belongs to the Villa Albani; the fourth, with a

young satyr, is in the Galleria dei Candelabri; the fifth, with Theseus and the Minotaur, is broken in two; one part being in the British Museum, the other in the Museo delle Terme. The latter also owns the sixth panel, with the figures of Ulysses and Diomedes. How interesting it would be for the student if plaster casts of these two unique sets of wall decorations were exhibited in the places to which the originals belonged! Should this plaster restitution be extended to all the sculptured statues found at Saint Agnes', I doubt very much if there would be space enough in the abbey to exhibit them. I cannot enter into a detailed account, not even into a simple catalogue of the Saint Agnes' marbles; but I cannot refrain from mentioning the statue of a Drunken Old Woman, which was kept at first in the Palazzo Verospi, afterwards in the Palazzo Fiano; it was then presented to Pope Clement XIII, by Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, and is now in the Capitoline Museum. The subject, strictly naturalistic, seems to have been a favourite one with the Romans, as proved from a better preserved replica which was bought in Italy (possibly in Rome) toward the end of the eighteenth century by Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria, and is now in Munich. The bibulous tendency of old women, as Helbig remarks, is often selected to point a moral in epigrams of the period. The oldest known was composed by Leonidas of Tarentum, a contemporary of Pyrrhus, for the tomb of an old inebriate named Maronis. It is a no less remarkable fact that such a low subject should have been chosen as a motif for ceramic art, as is the case with two terracotta vases, one found in the Island of Scyros, the other at Tanagra, the shape of which is but a reproduction of the two originals of the Capitol and of Munich.

The group of Hercules and the Hydra, likewise trans-

THE DRUNKEN OLD WOMAN OF THE CAPITOL

ferred to the Capitol from the Verospi collection, is generally quoted as an example and as a warning to restorers of ancient marbles. When discovered at Saint Agnes' by Cardinal Spada-Veralli,[1] the left leg of the hero, the lower part of the right leg, and the Hydra were missing. These were supplied by the sculptor Alessandro Algardi, the best artist of the day (1602–54); but as soon as the restoration was completed, the missing limbs and the monster were discovered, and they are now exhibited side by side with the restorations. Algardi had foreseen the truth, and his modelling can well stand comparison with the modelling of the author of the group.

More singular seems to have been the fate of the Æsculapius, on the plinth of which the name (Vass)-alectus is engraved. The statue was seen by Winckelmann in the Verospi Palace, together with others found at Saint Agnes', but I have not been able to ascertain its present location. There is hardly any doubt that it stood originally in the studio of "Peter Vassalectus and Son," the same artists whose names are gloriously connected with the cloisters of the Lateran, and about whom I have spoken at length in "Pagan and Christian Rome" (p. 238). Peter Vassalectus and Son must have owned a temporary workshop, at or near Saint Agnes', during some of the many restorations of the first quarter of the thirteenth century, and must have set up in their studio the Æsculapius, discovered by accident in that section of the Via Nomentana. It was customary to do this; in fact, the Æsculapius is by no means the only classic figure presiding, as it were, over the first attempts of mediæval Art revival.[2] On the right of the present

[1] Together, it seems, with the "youthful Augustus" now in the Sala della Croce Greca, n. 559.

[2] Peter's school lasted for four generations, from 1153 to the middle of the following century, and ranks next in importance to that of the Cosmati.

entrance to Santo Stefano Rotondo, on the Cælian, is a marble *cathedra*, which, according to tradition, was used by Saint Gregory the Great in reading some of his homilies. It bears the address of a *Magister Johannes*, who probably used it as a model for some episcopal chair. In October, 1886, I actually saw one of these mediæval marmorarii shops on the site of the Banca d' Italia, Via Nazionale, in which the place of honour was given to a statue of Antinoüs. The statue, still standing upright on a rough emergency pedestal, must have been used as a model by the artist who owned the shop, judging from the fact that among the delightful figures of saints in high-relief, from the ciborium of San Matteo in Merulana, now preserved in the cloisters of the Lateran, there is one representing Saint John the Baptist, obviously modelled on the type of an Antinoüs, with the same abundance of curly hair, the same profile and characteristic eyebrows.

A good description of the Constantinian group of Saint Agnes' is to be found in Bosio's "Roma Sotterranea" (p. 410). "This very old church," he says, "has three naves, in the middle one of which there were once exquisite 'amboni' or pulpits, for the Gospel and the Epistle, in the antique fashion; all carved in white marble and green or red porphyry." They were destroyed within my recollection to give more space to the faithful and to pilgrims. I have seen remains of the old monastery where the young maidens made their lifelong vows of chastity, and a staircase by which the nuns could descend to the level of the catacombs. Next to the Basilica of Saint Agnes I have seen the mausoleum of Constantia, the dome of which was covered with mosaics very much injured by age. Here the bodies of Saints Constantia,

THE CHAIR OF MAGISTER JOHANNES

Emerentiana, etc., were found by Cardinal Paolo Sfrondato, during his restoration of the church. Under the high altar was found the body of Agnes. The bones were very small and delicate, as becoming a young girl; the only missing portion was the skull.

The late Christian archæologist Stevenson discovered in the Biblioteca Pontaniana at Naples a description of Saint Agnes' by Mario Sarazani, stating, among other details, that the walls of the nave were covered with frescoes pertaining to the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century, representing the martyrdom of the young heroine, with descriptive legends, and the name of the author of the paintings. Some fragments of these valuable pictures were detached from the walls, and transferred to the Lateran Museum by order of Pius IX. Others representing the Crucifixion have been found lately in the interstices between the present ceiling and the old roof. This circumstance brings to my memory another such discovery which has been made in the church of San Giovanni a Porta Latina, on that promontory of the Cælian Hill known in the Middle Ages by the name of *Calvarello*, and now called *Monte d' Oro.* In May, 1916, a student of Christian Art, who had entered, at considerable personal risk, the space which separates the modern vaulted ceiling of the presbytery from the ancient sloping roof, found a set of well-preserved frescoes which had not been seen since the revival of classic studies, and, with the exception of a cursory statement which occurs in Crescimbeni's "Istoria della Chiesa di San Giovanni avanti porta Latina" (p. 74), had never been described. They cover the front of the apse and represent the twenty-four Elders in two lines of twelve each, and the Apocalyptic group of the symbols of the four Gospels.

These frescoes show no alteration nor restoration, and look as fresh as if their unknown author had just put down his brush. Elated by so great a find, the student examined the next day the upper zone of the walls of the nave; here also, under a heavy coating of whitewash, he discovered another group of frescoes equally valuable for their age and style, and for the subjects borrowed from the Old and New Testaments. Altogether there were forty-nine panels, of which thirty-two contain scenes from the New Testament. These precious illustrations of the Bible belong to the second half of the twelfth century and, very likely, to A.D. 1191, when the whole group of San Giovanni a Porta Latina was rebuilt and redecorated by Pope Celestinus III. There is no doubt, therefore, that the composition must be classified chronologically between the Biblical series of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, which dates from A.D. 1144, and that of Frater Romanus at Subiaco, which dates from A.D. 1228.

Notice has already been taken in the preceding chapter of the fact that the tiled roofs of churches of the Constantinian age have been preserved throughout the centuries without much change; they are practically the same as those laid by Helena over the Hierusalem; by Constantine over Saint Peter's grave; by Sixtus III over the Nativity; by Felix IV over the Templum Sacræ Urbis (Santi Cosma e Damiano); by Pope Sylvester over the Titulus Equitii (San Martino ai Monti). As far as Saint Agnes' is concerned, we are told by the biographer of Sergius II that the trusses of the roof were made anew between A.D. 844 and 845. And, as the tiles of the said roof belong to the original building, it is evident that, while the repairs were going on, the tiles must have been

BACCHIC SUBJECTS IN THE MOSAIC DECORATIONS OF CONSTANTINA'S MAUSOLEUM

Her portrait in the centre

set apart and used again after the new trusses were placed *in situ*. These are not idle speculations. The archæologist must take advantage of every detail apt to throw light on the subject under discussion. By examining with care the brick stamps of Saint Agnes' we have learned the following facts:

The builders of the memorial to Agnes gathered the roofing materials from edifices of the Golden Age already falling into decay, and filled up whatever gaps there were with new tiles expressly made in the Constantinian kilns. When Pope Symmachus undertook the restoration of the apse, somewhere about A.D. 500, good King Theodoric came to his help, and ordered a new supply of bricks and tiles to be made ready, inscribed with his name as follows:

REG*nante* D*omino* N*ostro* THEODERICO BONO ROME
IN NOMINE DEI FELIX ROMA

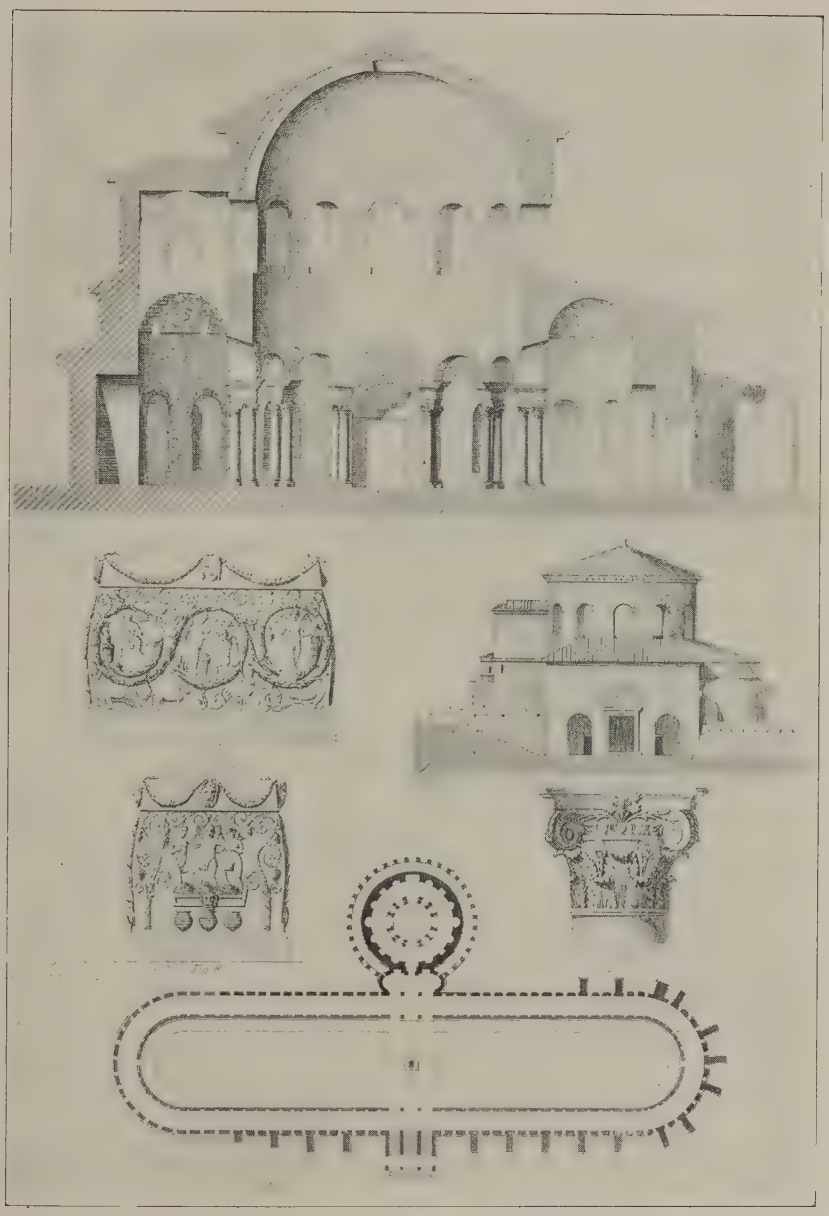
We owe the knowledge of these interesting details to Monsignor Francesco Bianchini, who climbed the roof and jeopardized his life on June 12, 1690.

Noticeable among the graceful ceremonies performed at Saint Agnes' in memory of the young titular saint, is the blessing of two lambs (*agni*) on her name-day, January 21st, when crowds of people visit her grave by the Via Nomentana, the fatigue of the journey being made light and pleasant by the budding almond trees, which whiten the surrounding landscape.

Armellini has found in the archives of San Pietro in Vinculis a document, attractive in its simplicity, concerning the above-named sacrifice of two lambs on the altar of the blessed Agnes. The document says: "Take notice that we, the clergy of the basilica of Saint Agnes, have

fulfilled our duty by offering to the Canons of Saint John the Lateran, our Lords, the yearly contribution of two live lambs, and that the deed has been duly certified by the public notary, Filippo Bissone. Since immemorial times the Canons of Saint John, our Lords, have come in state to Saint Agnes', with the stational cross at the head of the pageant, followed by a donkey covered with a cloth of gold, on the back of which the lambs are carried lying on two pillows. Once the ceremony is over, the bleating pets are given over to the nuns of Saint Cæcilia to be nursed until Easter week, when they are slaughtered, and their wool purified and woven into stoles and 'pallia,' which the Pope gives to archbishops as a mark of personal consideration and distinction."

Who was Saint Agnes, whose name is dear not only to the Christian archæologist, but to the world at large, since Wiseman's "Fabiola" has made popular her graceful figure and sweet nature? Her case is very similar to that of Saint Paul, in this sense, that both their family names could have been identified and made certain, had the Pontifical "Commissione di Archeologia Sacra" and its leading members, Visconti, Vespignani, Tongiorgi, de Rossi, paid proper attention to the discoveries made under their eyes, within a few feet of the grave of the Apostle (1830, 1852) and of that of the young martyr (1864–65). On the latter occasion a columbarium was found between Saint Agnes and Saint Costanza, the funeral tablets of which had been removed from their sockets *ab antiquo*. But was a proper search made? Was the mass of rubbish properly sifted for any scrap of information? I think not. Yet the problem was well worth investigating because the columbarium stood within the limits of the *agellus* (small garden) in which Agnes was



THE MAUSOLEUM OF CONSTANTIA

buried. "Perhaps," de Rossi says, "we should have learned the family name of the 'famosissima vergine romana'; perhaps we should have had a repetition of the experience made in the catacombs of Callixtus on the Appian Way, when the graves of the Cornelii and Cæcilii, famous in Roman classic history, were found lying almost side by side with those of Santa *Cæcilia*, of Pope *Cornelius*, and of other namesakes, humble followers of the Gospel."

I have carefully examined the epitaphs known to pertain to this neighbourhood, such as the one of Julia Irene Arista, mother of Atronius Tullianus, a Senator and a Jew; of Licinius Septimius, consul, etc.; and I have come to the conclusion that Agnes must have belonged to one of the branches of the *Aurelii*. Manutius copied here the gravestones of *Aurelia* Euresia, *Aurelia* Faustina, and Popilius *Aurelius*.[1] Suarez found the tablet of another *Aurelia* Faustina "in cryptis S. Agnetis" and of *Aurelia* Felicitas opposite the entrance of the church. Shall we add to the list the pleasant-sounding name of an Aurelia *Agnes* whom we worship on our altars?

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II. BASILICA OF SAINT LAWRENCE

The "Liber Pontificalis" asserts that Lawrence [1] was martyrized on the tenth day of August, A.D. 258, three days after the execution of Sixtus II, whose archdeacon he was. He was buried in a crypt hewn out of the rock "on the road to Tibur, in the field called *Ager Veranus*, with double stairs for the descent and ascent of pilgrims." These works are attributed to Pope Sylvester (314–35); hence the sanctuary above the grave has been rightly included in the Constantinian group of structures, an assignment which finds support in the style and details of its architecture made up of spoils of older edifices, having no uniformity nor connection whatever with each other. One thing is certain, that no martyr or confessor of the Age of Persecutions has become more popular in Rome than Lawrence.

In Armellini's index to the "Chiese di Roma" (2d edition), *forty-five* churches within the walls are registered under his name, of which eight deserve notice from an archæological point of view; namely, the original one "*ad corpus*" on the Via Tiburtina; *San Lorenzo in Damaso*, for its connection with the "stables of the Greens" and the "archibum Damasi"; *San Lorenzo in Lucina*, for its connection with the Sun dial of Augustus;

[1] Lawrence is supposed to have been of Spanish birth, but nothing certain is known about his early life. Both Pope and archdeacon were co-involved in the eighth persecution (A.D. 258), and martyrized. To Lawrence's intercession Prudentius ascribes the final conversion of Rome. He is commemorated in the Protestant calendar on August 10th.

ETCHING OF SAN LORENZO BY ISRAEL SYLVESTRE, ABOUT 1615

San Lorenzo in Miranda, for its location among the *mirabilia* of the Forum and of the Sacred Way; *San Lorenzo in Pallacinis*, from the name of the great portico leading from the Villa Publica to the Circus Flaminius; *San Lorenzo ad Taurellum*, on the Esquiline Hill, from its connection with the Forum (Statilii) Tauri, the Caput Tauri, and the horti Tauriani; *San Lorenzo ad Sancta Sanctorum*, the Pope's private chapel at the Lateran; and, lastly, *San Lorenzo in Formoso*, more commonly surnamed *in Panis Perna*, an obscure denomination which may possibly be connected with a Perperna,[1] just as that of Formoso is evidently connected with Pope Formosus (891–96), who may have rebuilt or redecorated the church.

There is a striking resemblance between the patchwork of Saint Lawrence's, and that of the other basilicas, dating from the period of Constantine. I have already quoted the instances of Saint Peter's, Saint Paul's, Saint Agnes' almost entirely built with spoils of classic edifices, without being able to specify which these edifices were.[2] In the case of Saint Lawrence's, we have a certain reason for believing that some of its marbles were removed from the portico of Octavia. Pliny (H.N. XXXVI, 5) speaks of Sauros and Batrachos, the favourite artists of Augustus, who entrusted them with the task of designing, carving, and erecting the temples of Jupiter and Juno in the portico of Octavia, having been denied the privilege of signing their work with their names, they hit upon the device of carving among the fluting of the columns and the acanthus-leaves of the friezes their

[1] Mazochius saw and copied in the church an epitaph raised by a Sextus Æmilius Myrinus in memory of his departed wife *Perpennia*.

[2] Except, perhaps, in the case of the Basilica Æmilia, from which twenty-four magnificent fluted columns of pavonazzetto were removed to Saint Paul's by Valentinian II in the year 386.

"armoires parlantes"; namely, lizards (*Sauroi*) and frogs (*Batrachoi*). These signs appear also in the floral decorations of the Ara Pacis, another masterpiece of the Augustan age, in the frieze of the villa of Mæcenas at Carciano near Tivoli, and lastly in two capitals of the nave of Saint Lawrence's. These last, however, are too patent an imitation of originals of the Golden Age to be taken into consideration.

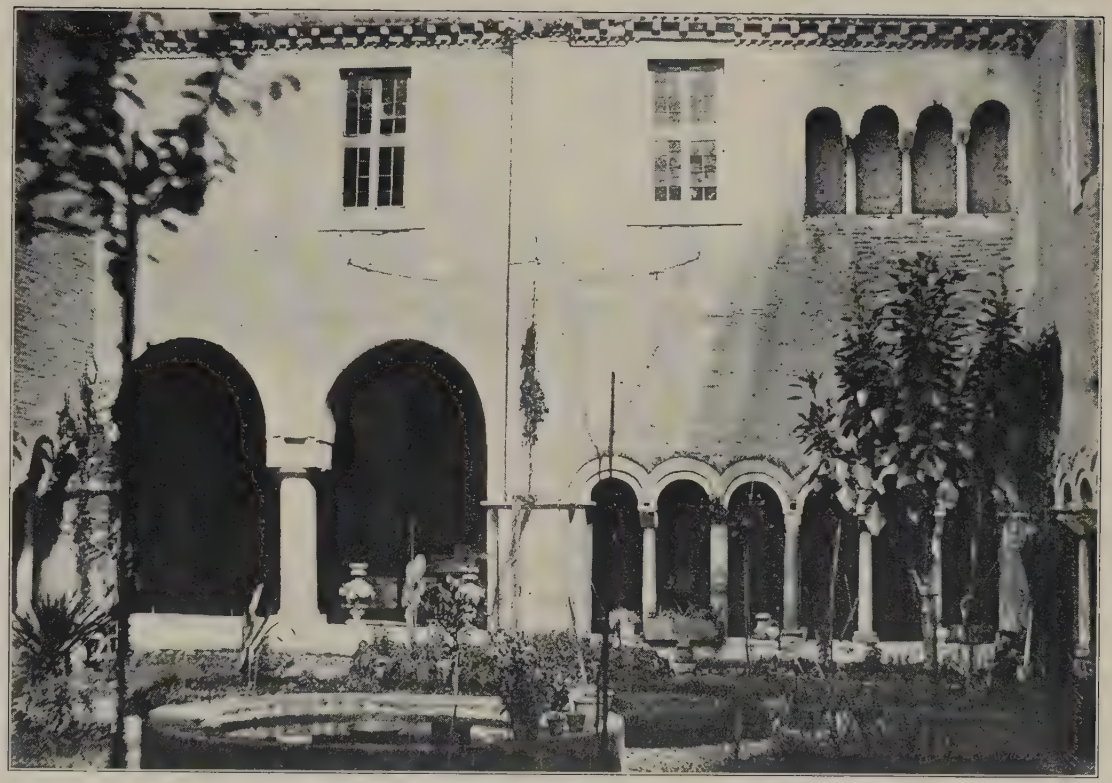
I have just remarked apropos of the archæological discoveries made from time to time at Saint Agnes' that if all the marbles, statues, busts, bas-reliefs, and inscriptions found at the second milestone of the Via Nomentana had been preserved on the spot, or at least had not been scattered in ten or twenty different places, the Museum of the Basilica would have ranked amongst the finest in Rome. The same thing must be said of Saint Lawrence's and of its neighbourhood, which has proved to be one of the wealthiest mines of antiquities in the suburbs of Rome.

Flaminio Vacca mentions in his "Diary"[1] the following discoveries:

(*Mem.* 14.) "In widening the piazza which opens in front of San Lorenzo, the old church [of San Romano] was levelled to the ground, in the foundations of which, and embedded in the masonry, eighteen or twenty imperial marble busts were found. The best part of these portrait-heads were purchased by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, and transferred to his museum." [They are now in Naples.]

(*Mem.* 15.) "I have seen many sarcophagi and cinerary urns come out of the ground, just outside the

[1] *Memorie di varie Antichità*, written in 1594 and published first in Montfaucon's *Diarium Italicum*, chap. VIII; later by Carlo Fea in *Miscellanea Antiquaria*, vol. I, pp. 51–106.



THE CLOISTERS OF SAN LORENZO

gate of San Lorenzo; some of white marble, some of red granite, but all injured or broken by former hunters of antiquities."

(*Mem.* 107.) "I remember witnessing the finding on the Via Tiburtina, outside the gate, of a marble coffin containing the bones of a mule with a laudatory inscription stating that the beast was so affectionate to her master that she would kneel before him (already advancing in years), so as to make his mounting easier."

(*Mem.* 108.) "I remember also a curious find made outside the same gate in a farm belonging to the chapter of Saint John, where the canons, bent on building a new gate, gave leave to the master-masons to make use of two blocks of travertine lying in the adjoining field, and fitting so close together that it was difficult to tell them apart. Great, therefore, was their surprise when in breaking the blocks they found concealed in an inner receptacle a vase of 'alabastro cotognino' containing ashes, twenty buttons (?) of rock crystal, a gold ring with a gem, a comb of ivory with golden teeth, and shreds of cloth of gold." [1]

(*Mem.* 75.) "I remember having heard that Metello Varo, in repairing the road outside the gate, found a marble lion which, having been restored by Giovanni Sciarano, a sculptor from Fiesole, is now placed in the loggia of the Villa Medici on the Pincian." (The other lion, forming the pair, was chiselled by Flaminio Vacca himself out of a block of Pentelic marble from the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.)

[1] A similar discovery — if not the same one — I find recorded in Francesco Ficoroni's *Diary*, edited by Carlo Fea: "Under the pontificate of Clement XI (1700–21) in the vineyard belonging to the Colonna estate, on the Via Tiburtina, a little beyond San Lorenzo, a sepulchral chamber was discovered, together with a porphyry urn, containing bones and ashes, and a gold ring, the intaglio of which (it was a sardonyx) represented a chimæra."

Ulisse Aldovrandi, the archæologist from Bologna, in his peregrinations through the Roman villas and palaces in search of antiques, saw in the house of Messer Paolo Ponti, near the Piazza del Popolo, *thirty-three* statues, or important fragments of statues, which had been found in his vineyard opposite the church of San Lorenzo; among which was a wild boar so beautiful and life-like that the sum of five hundred gold scudi were offered and refused for it.

Pietro Sante Bartoli, the Pope's Commissioner of Antiquities in the second half of the seventeenth century, describes how, at the bottom of a sand-pit outside the gate, a colossal group was discovered representing Agrippina nursing the infant Nero. It bore traces of polychromy, which showed that the ancients not only used to gild their statues, but also to stain them with light colouring, in the sober style with which the Greek lekythoi have made us familiar. And here I may remark that of the six or seven hundred statues and busts which I have dug out, or have seen dug out of the ground, about thirty per cent showed vestiges of colouring, which in many cases faded away as soon as they were brought in contact with the air. We know, at any rate, from the testimony of Fröhner that Trajan's spiral column was stained and gilded at the same time. "One of the proofs of antiquity," says Winkelmann in his "Storia dell' arte," "by which a modern imitation can be singled out from the original one is the yellowish-pinkish hue, applied to the marble with a kind of encaust or wax-varnish, noticeable in many of them for the purpose of imitating the colour of human flesh."

The same Commissioner P. S. Bartoli speaks of "bellissime colonne di verde antico," found in demolishing the church of San Romano (opposite Saint Law-

THE CLOISTERS OF SAN LORENZO: SIDE VIEW

rence's), at the time of Pope Chigi (Alexander VII, 1755–67). Eight of these "bellissime colonne" are to be seen in the Lancellotti-Ginnetti Chapel in Sant' Andrea della Valle, and four more in the Barberini Chapel, the first on the left in the same church.

The question now arises to whom this villa, so rich in statues, busts, columns, vases, and ornamental works, may have belonged. Whoever the owner was, he was not an ordinary citizen. One of the most acceptable names, suggested by Nibby and Gori, is that of *Antonius Pallans*, who owned a considerable estate in this part of the City; the famous horti *Pallantiani*, which were included, after his death, in the park system of the Esquiline.

This Pallans, who boasted of a royal descent (from the King of Arcadia), was no more nor less than the son of a slave of Antonia the junior, mother of the Emperor Claudius. Having gained importance and freedom, and having become an expert in court intrigues, he induced Claudius to marry Agrippina and to adopt Nero,[1] for which exploits the Senate offered him the insignia of the Prætorship, and fifteen million of sesterces, equal to about three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. With such brilliant beginnings, no wonder that he should have traded on the good faith of Claudius, and made himself the financial administrator of the Empire, with the help of his fellow freedmen Callistus and Narcissus. Richer than Crassus, whose territorial fortune was valued at two hundred million sesterces, he hoarded riches valued at three hundred millions, equal to seven million and a half dollars. His star began to decline under the rule of Nero, who first deprived him

[1] I have just mentioned the group of Agrippina nursing the infant Nero, discovered in this neighbourhood.

of any power of interference in public affairs, and later denounced him to the Senate as guilty of "lèse majesté." The judges absolved him, but Nero found the way of getting rid of the millionaire freedman, to whose memory a mausoleum was erected not far from the church we are dealing with.

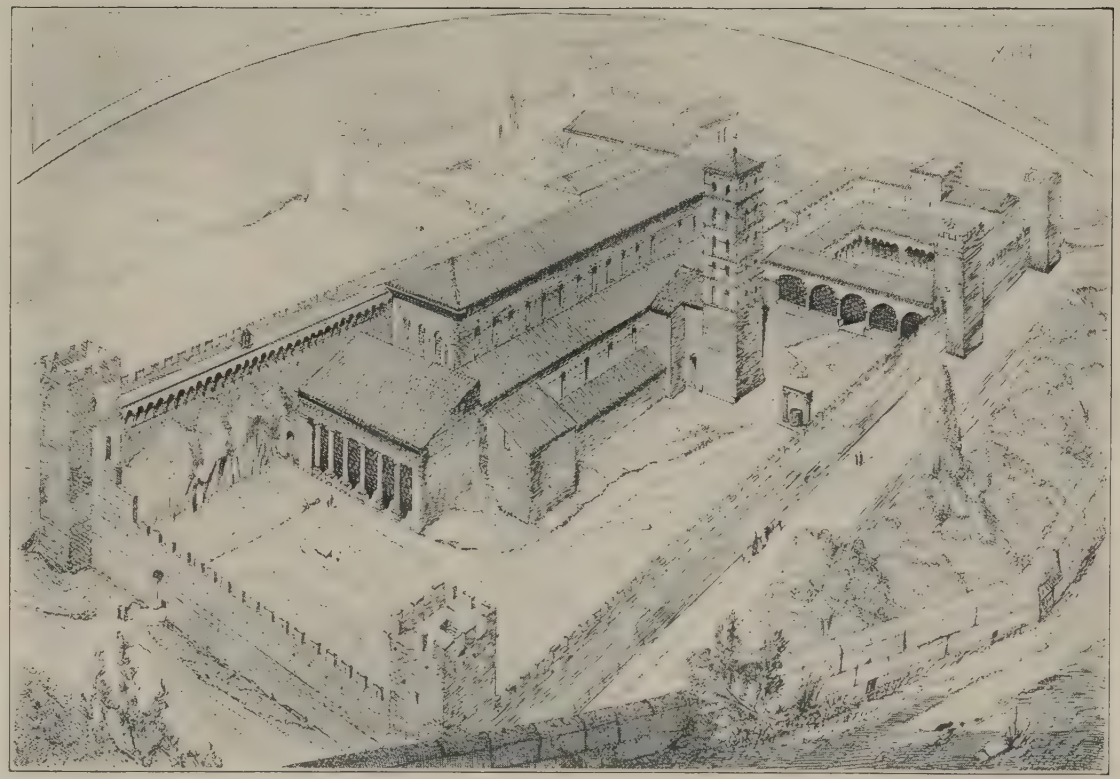
I think I have a better conjecture to make. In the year 1902 a water-pipe was found near San Lorenzo inscribed with the name of Æmilius Æmilianus, the same, I believe, who was proclaimed Emperor by the Legions of Mœsia in 253, and murdered in 268; leaving his wife Cornelia Supera to mourn over his tragic end. The finding of that pipe, nearly three inches in diameter, proves that Æmilianus possessed an estate (Ager Veranus) at the first milestone of the Via Tiburtina, abundantly supplied with spring water and with a wealth of works of Art.

Another connecting link between the Ager Veranus and personages of imperial rank was found in 1863 in a set of frescoes of the vestibule of the church concealed under one or more coats of whitewashing. They represent events in the life and passion of martyrs buried in the adjoining catacombs of Cyriaca, such as the throwing of Abondius and Irenæus into a deep well, and the decapitation of a woman, Cyrilla by name, believed to have been the daughter of the Emperor Herennius Etruscus,[1] martyrized in the persecution of Claudius Gothicus about A.D. 270.[2]

Coming now to more recent experiences, I must acknowledge that were we to take into consideration the discoveries made under Pius IX on the occasion of the so-called "improvements" of San Lorenzo, a volume

[1] Cæsar A.D. 249; Augustus A.D. 251; killed in the same year.

[2] Consult Baron de Witte's article in *Mélanges d'archéologie*, du p. Martin.



THE FORTIFIED ENCLOSURE OF LAURENTIOPOLIS
From the Reconstruction of Rohault de Fleury

would hardly be sufficient for their enumeration.[1] De Rossi has given a summary of the finds in the "Bollettino Cristiano" of 1863. He speaks of "innumerable" graves found under the pavement of the Basilica, from which many valuable records were recovered. I remember being myself present at the uncovering of a sepulchre inside of which an encolpion was found in the shape of a cross, to be worn on the breast, with an inner receptacle for a small relic. On the outside surface were engraved the name "Emmanuel" and the words "God be with us: oh demon! may this cross be thy death!" In another grave the head of a youth was discovered modelled in stucco. Our fancy ran at once to the celebrated wax heads discovered in the necropolis of Cuma; but, on a closer inspection, it was made clear that the head had fallen by accident inside the coffin. The marble slabs of which the coffin was built had been stolen from the adjoining catacombs of Cyriaca, which would rank with the richest and most interesting of the suburban belt, were it not for their precarious state and for the risk of being buried alive which hangs over the imprudent explorer.

They were first entered by Antonio Bosio in 1593, who gives an account of his daring feat in Chapter 41, Book III, of his "Roma Sotterranea." The graves cut out of the live rock were for the most part empty of their contents; some were still sealed with tiles or with marble slabs with the Constantinian monogram scratched on the plaster lining. There were also signs of recognition stuck in the lines while the plaster was still

[1] I have inherited from Count Virginio Vespignani, the favourite architect of Pius IX, a precious set of original drawings, water-colours, engravings, and photographs, concerning these so-called "restorations." Their interest lies in the fact that they give every possible detail about the state of the edifice, of its frescoes and mosaics, etc., before the reconstruction.

soft, by means of which the survivors could single out, among thousands, the "loculus" of their dear one. Bosio mentions rings cut in bone, ivory figurines, sea-shells, goblets, perfume bottles, doves with an olive branch in the mouth. He also speaks of several wigs, found in this as well as other cemeteries. "In the grave of a nameless holy woman," he says, "I observed remnants of artificial hair [linen strands] of chestnut hue, and plaited according to the fashion of the day."

It was at Saint Lawrence's that virgins consecrated to God made their vows of chastity; it was in the above-named catacombs that they were laid to rest. I have spoken at length on this subject in "Pagan and Christian Rome" (page 225), and I may add that in de Rossi's account of the finds of 1853, mention is made of the mortal spoils of Licentius, the favourite disciple of Saint Augustine (A.D. 405); of Flavius Magnus, a celebrated teacher of Latin eloquence (438); of the virgin Praetextata (464); and of fragments of an inscription bearing the name of Marozia and of John XII. Luitprand charges Marozia and Theodora, both *senatrices almæ Urbis*, of unspeakable turpitudes and couples their names with those of Sergius III and John X. With the help of other fragments of the same inscription preserved in the cloisters of San Lorenzo, de Rossi was able to reconstruct the whole text, which amounts to the reconstructing of a page in the history of one of the most obscure periods of the Roman Papacy.

Theodora, most exquisite of body, of keen mind and undaunted spirit, born of a family whose origin is unknown, comes out of the darkness like a mysterious Semiramis and becomes the all-powerful queen of the City, governing it with wisdom, tact, and an astonishing show of virility. She had married Theophilactus, Con-

THE GRAVE OF PIUS IX

sul, Duke, and "Senator of the Romans," and shared with him the omnipotent influence which cast into shade that of the Pope himself. Luitprand relates (but his evidence is more than doubtful) how a priest of the diocese of Ravenna had become the lover of young Theodora, who managed to have him elected first Bishop of Bologna, later Archbishop of Ravenna, and last (in order to be nearer him) Pope, under the name of John X. In the meantime she made use of the fascination which her two beautiful daughters Marozia and Theodora exercised over Romans and foreigners alike. It was said of Sergius III that he lived on intimate terms with Marozia, and that the youth, who was to become Pope John XI, was their son. Marozia ended by marrying Alberic about the year 915.

These, then, were the men, Theophilactus I and Alberic II, who inaugurated a new era in the history of Rome — or rather their wives did. It was a new state of things, considering that since the days of Galla Placidia, of Eudoxia and of Amalasuntha, no woman had risen above mediocrity with the exception of Marcella, the devout friend of Saint Jerome, and of Scholastica, the sister of Saint Benedict. A Theodora and a Marozia of the tenth century did not redeem their ignorance with anything like classic culture, such as happened to be the case, at a much later period, with Lucrezia Borgia. Most probably, they did not know how to read and write, if we consider the fact that in the year 945 these illustrious dames were compelled to sign a diploma with the formula (used by illiterate people), beginning with the sign of the cross, and ending with the words, "this is the evidence of Marozia, noblest of ladies, who cannot write ("*literæ nescia*")." In another document Stephania, likewise, acknowledges her inability to sign her name.

However, these women were no more immoral and do not deserve more blame than Lucrezia Borgia, or Queen Elizabeth, or Catherine of Russia. Speaking in broad terms they shook in a certain measure the rules and the habits which made the mediæval woman a prisoner in her own house, and a slave of a cruel husband.

The end of Marozia is soon told. In 925, after the death of Alberic, she became more powerful than ever by marrying Guy Margraf of Tuscany and brother of Hugh, King of Italy. In June, 928, she imprisoned the Pope John X in the darkest dungeon of the Castle of Sant' Angelo. There he was starved to death, and the unenviable chair of Saint Peter's was given, first, to Leo VI, then to Stephen VII, and lastly to her own son, who took the name of John XI. But the days of retribution were fast approaching: a trifling incident which gave offence to her stepson, Alberic the younger, brought a popular outbreak; the Castle of Sant' Angelo, her last place of refuge, was taken by storm; but what was her end no one will ever know.

The plan and structure of the group of Saint Lawrence's are exceedingly difficult to understand: neither shall I try to describe them. As I have said concerning the discoveries made at Saint Paul's in 1830 and 1850, the group of Saint Lawrence's, with its chapels, hospitals, baths, libraries, underwent the same fate at the hands of the Saracens that we have already described in connection with Saint Paul's and Saint Peter's. In 845 the infidels, having found these suburban sanctuaries defenceless, wrecked and ransacked them at leisure, carrying away inestimable treasures which the faithful had accumulated in the course of centuries over the tomb of the Protomartyr. The biographer of

THE PORCH OF HONORIUS III AT SAINT LAWRENCE

Leo IV (847 to 855), speaks of worship omitted in this church as a consequence of the invasion, and resumed only after many years in the lower church. To prevent the recurrence of these disasters a detached fort (Laurentiopolis) was built round the basilica and its appendages, but no historical document mentions the fact. Armellini has discovered the following memorandum of the time of Urban the VIII (1623–44):[1] "There are yet to be seen considerable remains of the fortified enclosure which once surrounded the church; they are better preserved on the side facing the Via Tiburtina." I have on my side discovered an unpublished sketch of Laurentiopolis drawn about 1534 by Martin Heemskerk which is reproduced in "Ruins and Excavations" (p. 85, fig. 35). This detached fort was connected with the City by means of a portico or colonnade half a mile long; and when a new quarter was built on its site, I paid great attention to the laying of the new foundations in the hope of finding some remains of this covered way, or at least one of the many hundred capitals and columns. My expectations were not realized.

Saint Lawrence's was (as I have said for other Constantinian churches) the capital of a small kingdom, which included the *basilica maior* built by Sixtus III (623–40) in honour of the Blessed Virgin; the oratory of Saints Abundius and Irenæus; another of Saint Agapetus; a third of Saints Stephen and Callianus; a fourth of Leo the Bishop; a fifth of Saint Romanus; a sixth of Saint Ianuarius; and then hospices, refectories, hospitals — "pauperum habitacula"; baths where pilgrims could

[1] The text says *verbatim:* "There is no doubt that the Basilica was once surrounded by a wall, in the manner of a castle, because conspicuous remains of it are still to be seen on the north side facing the highroad."

purify their bodies before purifying their souls; a *prætorium* or villa or pontifical habitation endowed with two libraries; baths,[1] monasteries, etc., in the manner of a suburban city. There is a tradition quoted by Mellini according to which the bodies of Saint Ippolitus and other martyrs, buried under the high altar, were seen by many witnesses, among whom was the abbot of the adjoining monastery, Father Angelico from Bologna, who, having tried more than once to descend into the crypt, was always seized with feelings of fear and with trembling fits, until, by means of prayers and fasting, he mastered his repulsion and succeeded in beholding the holy bodies, lying in a semicircle, "with their heads resting on a stone."

Perhaps the most interesting object which the modern pilgrim can behold in visiting the church of San Lorenzo is the grave of Pope Pius IX, whose kindly face and ready repartee and benevolent manners are always fresh in my memory, although half a century has elapsed since my first introduction to the venerable pontiff. As regards the preceding ages, the work which interests us most is the porch of Honorius III [2] by which the basilica is entered. It is more beautiful than those of San Giorgio in Velabro, and of the Tre Fontane; more complete and perfect than those of Santa Cecilia, San Clemente, San Lorenzo in Loreina, etc. There is no doubt of its being the work of Honorius III because his portrait and his name are to be seen in the mosaic frieze, of which I append a facsimile. More than the portrait of the Pope, our attention is attracted by a kneeling figure, with hands extended as if he was

[1] The supply of water for drinking and bathing purposes was perfected by Pope Gregory II, A.D. 715–31. Lead pipes inscribed with his name were found in 1886.

[2] Honorius Savelli, elected 1216–27.

addressing a prayer. He wears a red tunic, white stockings, and reddish boots. This style of dressing was familiar with the Byzantine Emperors of Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is, therefore, probable that the figure represents Peter de Courtenay, Duke of Auxerre, who was crowned Emperor of the East in 1217 by Pope Honorius. Such an event as the coronation of a foreign Emperor, celebrated for the first time in Rome since the days of Charlemagne, was of such extraordinary importance that it is easy to understand the willingness, nay, the ambition of the Pope to have its memory perpetuated in the porch of his favourite church. Pierre de Courtenay, son of Yolande, and therefore nephew of Henry and Baldwin, inherited from them the imperial power; but the ceremony of the coronation seems to have brought him bad luck. He could never take possession of the throne because, having reached Brindisi, where a powerful Venetian fleet was waiting to escort him across the straits, instead of sailing at once for the Dardanelles, he tarried in a vain attempt to reconquer Durazzo. But having ventured among the mountains of Albania, together with the pontifical legate Cardinal Colonna, they were made prisoners by Theodore Lascaris, and thrown into a dungeon where they found their deaths.

Students wishing to enter more thoroughly into the intricacies of the hybrid structure of San Lorenzo, should consult the following sources of information:

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